THE

PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

PREFACE.

THE Survey has been resumed, and is now in active progress, the party having been at work since the middle of October in the hill country south of Judah. This little-known region has yielded results of the greatest importance to the cause of Biblical topography. Among the identifications proposed by Lieut. Conder are especially that of Dhoheriyeh, with the Levitical city of Debir, on which Lieut. Conder writes with great force and clearness; that of Bezetho or Beth Zetho, 1 Maccab. vii. 19; Chozeba, 1 Chron. iv. 22; Maarath, Joshua xv. 59; Arab, Joshua xv. 52; Zanoah, Joshua xv. 56; the Rock of Maon, 1 Sam. xxiii. 25; and the Hill of Hachilah, 1 Sam. xxiii. 19. His reports may be also referred to for his valuable information on the Rock Etam, the Forest of Hareth, the wood of Ziph, and other places.

The Survey party have been searching for boundary marks round the Levitical cities of Juttah and Eshtemoa. No such inscriptions as those which rewarded M. Clermont-Ganneau at Gezer have been yet discovered; but, on the other hand, boundary stones, which may be ancient, are observed at Eshtemoa, and it is curious that at both places the cardinal points at the presumed Levitical distance are on hill-tops.

The American Association have not yet despatched their second expedition. The Committee, however, are carefully considering their next step. It has already been reported that a far larger sum has been collected in the States than that with which our own Fund was started.

The amount received from September 22nd to December 22nd, from all sources, was £1,243 15s. 5d., being more than £300 a month, a rate which, if it could be maintained through the whole year, would place the Committee fairly beyond anxiety. The income always asked for is £5,000. The balance in the banks on the latter date was £107 6s. 3d. The expenses of the Survey amount, necessarily, and at the lowest estimate, to £200 a month.

A meeting was held at Manchester on Thursday, Dec. 17th, under the presidency of Mr. Hugh Birley, M.P., which was addressed by Mr. Grove, M. Clermont-Ganneau, Major Wilson, Rev. W. F. Birch, and other gentlemen. The meeting pledged itself to raise the sum of £500 for the Fund during the following year.

The Rev. William Wright, of Damascus, has kindly consented to act as Honorary Secretary for the Fund in that city. Dr. Chaplin has already for some years acted as the Honorary Secretary for Jerusalem, while the Consul-General at Beyrout and the Consul at Jerusalem are both members of the General Committee.

THE SURVEY OF PALESTINE.

LIEUT. CLAUDE R. CONDER'S REPORTS.

XXII.

JERUSALEM, 1*st October*, 1874.

I SEND home a few notes on points of interest which I have noted on coming back to the country before recommencing our active work.

I landed at Jaffa on 20th September, having left England on the night of the 10th, and spent a Sunday morning in Bologna. This is about as rapid a journey as could possibly be made under existing arrangements.

Gezer.—On passing from Ramleh I made a *détour* by Abû Shusheh to visit Tell Jezer, and the place where the two inscriptions were found. Tell Jezer, which I have had occasion to describe previously, is a prominent mound, partly natural, partly artificial, commanding one of the main routes from the plains to Jerusalem. On the south are rough caves and tombs, some having names, as shown on the Survey. On the east, in the valley, is a fine spring 'Ain Yerdeh, and on the opposite slope is the ruin of the same name. It was on the top of this flat hill, rather more than a mile from Tell Jezer, that the two stones were found. The line which joins their positions (about 100 yards apart) runs approximately north-west and south-east. They seem to have formed portions of the integral rock, and were written on its flat surface, which renders the fact that one inscription has to be reversed to read the Greek more easy to understand. There are evidences of considerable work; round this part of the hill the rock is cut in various places, and some shallow troughs, looking like sarcophagi with the sides knocked off, are visible. Somewhat in the same line, farther north, I was shown a long, rough stone, with two large letters, about a foot high, cut at the end. It has fallen on another, in a manner which suggests the former existence of some rude monument or sarcophagus. I was told of the existence of another stone farther south-east, but did not see it. Of the two first found, nothing is visible beyond the chipped rock in the place where they were cut out. The first is in the Serai at Jerusalem, where it is to be seen, and a photograph and several sketches have been taken. The other is in the Serai at Ramleh.

Mr. Drake's Last Illness.—It is a melancholy consolation to find how kindly Mr. Drake was treated during his last painful illness. The kindness of all the English residents was marked and untiring, and all that skill and care could do was done. I fear I hardly did justice in my

memoir to Dr. Thévier, who had been so serviceable and kind in his former attack. The good doctor undertook, at a moment's notice, a long and tedious journey to Jericho. He lost his way, and suffered by the fall of his horse. He reached us in the middle of the night, and by his prescriptions afforded immediate relief to Mr. Drake. He never left us until we were all safely established in Jerusalem, when the immediate danger was over. During Mr. Drake's last illness he showed the same kindness and attention.

The behaviour of Mr. Hornstein was also worthy of the highest commendation. Nothing could exceed his care and thoughtfulness. During the long and trying period of forty-two days hardly any one in the hotel seems to have been able to take any rest, and Dr. Chaplin was finally quite worn out, and suffered very considerably for some time after.

Christian Work in the Mosque.—On the 25th inst. I visited, in company with Mr. Shick and Sergeant Black, the Haram enclosure, under a special invitation from the sheikh, to see certain new discoveries. The first of these was a small figure in bas-relief, lately uncovered on the side of the little table which supports the Shield of Hamzeh. The whole of the work of this piece appears to be Christian, as are also several of the capitals to the columns, such as those on each side of the Mirhab. The little figure seems to represent a saint in flowing drapery, with the aureole, and holding some indistinguishable object in the raised right hand.

Greek Christian Inscription.—The second discovery, made a few days ago, whilst renewing the pavement of the mosque floor, is of greater importance. One of the flags was found to have a well-cut and preserved Greek inscription on the under side. It contains a date, and the crosses show it to be of Christian origin.

As far as I am able to make out at a first glance, it is a memorial tablet, but part of the stone has been unfortunately lost, and I was only able to recover this part of the inscription by means of the cast made by the deep cut letters in the underlying bed of mortar. No doubt this stone will prove of great interest (see p. 56).

Mosaics.—The wooden frame which surrounds the sacred rock has been taken down, but nothing of importance was visible in addition to what is already known. The works are rapidly approaching completion, and the appearance of the interior and dome, now that the paint has been renewed and the mosaics washed, is wonderfully beautiful. The curious question of the method in which these mosaics are placed in the wall, we carefully investigated. There is no doubt that the gold tessera have been intentionally fixed in an inclined position, so that the rays directly reflected may be directed towards the spectators below, whereby the brilliancy is greatly increased. (See "Letters from M. Clermont-Ganneau, 1874," p. 138.) The pieces of other colours have not, however, been so placed.

In parts, where the mosaics are defective or dull in colour, a coat of oil paint has been supplied.

Arches.—The marble casing, in black and white, to the arches supporting the drum has never been removed, and we are thus still ignorant of the true form of the arch. The exterior has never, however, been correctly represented. The keystone of each arch has a horizontal soffit, so that the arches cannot be said to be either pointed or round.

Glass.—Mr. Shick is of opinion that the apparent resemblance in the glass mosaic of the windows to the method above described of placing the mosaics of the dome, is only the result of accident, or of clumsy mending at a former period.

The Passages north of the Kubbet es Sakhrah.—On the 28th inst. I visited, in company with Sergeant Black, some of the great cisterns of the Haram, which are only dry just at the end of summer. We first descended No. 3, afterwards No. 1. These, as will be remembered, are under the platform to the north of the Kubbet es Sakhrah, and the western one (No. 3) is inclined in such a manner that its production in a line north-east would intersect that of No. 1, at about the line of the north steps of the platform, so that a connection with the vault running east and west on that side, and supposed by Mr. Fergusson to be part of a basilica, may be conjectured. I had always suspected that the north side of these two passages would be found to be modern, but had feared that the plaster would hide the work. I was, therefore, greatly pleased, on descending No. 3, to find at the farther end a wall, evidently more modern, closing the passage, and built irregularly in an oblique line across it. The lower part was cemented, but above the work showed and proves to be irregular in size, with broad mortar joints. The passage, which is throughout about thirty feet high, is roofed with a semicircular arch of fine masonry. The keystone of the arch is very narrow, and the voussoirs gradually increase in breadth as they approach the haunches. This character of work, similar to that of the twin pools of the Sisters of Zion, is probably Roman. The voussoirs are cut irregularly by the end wall, and there can be no doubt that the passage continues farther north. On descending No. 1 I made the same remark, although the masonry of the cross wall was not so easily seen, but the voussoirs of the roofing arch run beyond in the same way. The passages, though now used for cisterns, were probably cut first for another object, and communicated with the exterior (see Note, p. 11). There is a side chamber in No. 3, with a well mouth, which may very probably be the House of Baptism, or, more properly, Bath-room, mentioned in the Talmud.

The Zion Scarp.—Since Captain Warren left Jerusalem, no work has been undertaken equalling in interest and importance that which is now being carried out at his own expense by Mr. Henry Maudsley, M.I.C.E. This gentleman has undertaken various improvements in the Bishops' School on Zion, and in prosecuting these with a purely benevolent motive, he has contrived to carry his researches for stones and for cisterns in such directions as are best calculated to give results of archæological interest. The illustration of Josephus's account, furnished

by the present discoveries, is in the highest degree instructive, and all travellers should in future make a point of visiting the school and its grounds.

Mr. Maudsley kindly undertook to show me the whole of his work, which I will endeavour shortly to describe.

The Bishop's School grounds stand partly on rock, partly on made earth, brought down from above, forming a garden terrace which extends to the English cemetery, a length of about four hundred feet in all. Mr. Maudsley's excavations are exactly those which I recommended should be made in this part in one of my early reports to the society, and the results are those which I hoped to obtain. The dining-room of the school-house proves to be founded on a rock, buttress, or tower, some twenty-five feet square, and reached by a flight of rock-cut steps on one side. The tower, whose scarp has an average height of about twenty feet, stands on a second rock platform of about twenty feet width, beyond which line Mr. Maudsley finds a drop of more than twenty-five feet. On the north-west side the scarp is now traced back, and a line discovered running due north, with a similar scarp directed on the present south-west corner of the city wall (a discovery of the utmost value, showing the line of the old west wall of the city, and proving the tower in question to be the ancient south-west angle of the first wall).

It was found in building the school that this scarped block had formed the base of a pair of cisterns, with walls some six to eight feet thick, also rock-cut. Behind the tower, Mr. Maudsley has just lit upon a very large cistern, cut in the rock, and with a mouth about the level of the top of the rock platform. There is a communication between this large cistern and the base of the tower. No one reading this description can fail to see how exactly it carries out the description by Josephus of the smaller towers upon the first wall. They were twenty cubits (or about twenty-six feet) square, with steps leading up. They had a solid base twenty cubits high, not, as has been previously supposed, built so with large stones, but hewn, as we now see, in the solid rock. Finally, above this base were cisterns and rooms. The work, as now exposed in parts, is magnificent. The labour of hewing these great scarps, apparently with an instrument not more powerful than the modern picks used by the natives, must have been immense.

On the western side were found numerous fallen stones, many of which seem to me to be Roman work, with a draft of three inches broad. There are also voussoirs of arches evidently of considerable span, fragments of column shafts, some three feet in diameter, and the jamb and lintel stones of a great doorway. The stones were found principally face downwards, as though fallen from the tower above, or pushed over from within.

I have already described, in a former report, the system of cisterns which runs along the top of the scarp east of this first tower. Mr. Maudsley has now succeeded in clearing this great scarp, which faces south, and has reached the bottom of it. The total height is about

thirty feet, and it stands on a rock platform of unknown width. There would, no doubt, be another fall beyond this, but I doubt the existence of a regular second scarp below, for which there would be no real use. The rock is probably rough, and left in its natural state.

A curious buttress sticks out of this scarp, and forms a division between two large cisterns, which seem to have been of masonry on the other sides. An inspection of the cement used in these, leads me to conclude that the cisterns are Saracenic work applied to the ancient scarp of which they form no part.

We now arrived at a sort of tunnel driven by the workmen against the face of the scarp, and on the platform as a base. Following this we came to the foot of the set of rock-cut steps explored by Captain Warren, and marked on the Ordnance Survey. It proves to be, as Captain Warren supposes, the base of the scarp, and the total height presented to the enemy at this point is some thirty feet. At the top of the steps are two cisterns or baths, with rock-cut sides and a masonry arch. These were the earliest discoveries of Mr. Maudsley, and I noticed them in a report which was mislaid in England. Above and behind these are a brick-kiln, a cistern, and a wall, apparently more modern, but of good masonry.

In the portion of the scarp nearest the tower already described, is a rock chamber, containing a large water-trough, cut like a sarcophagus out of the rock, and beside it are two mangers also rock-cut. These were found during a visit by Mr. Drake, and are mentioned by him in his last report, which I have just sent home.

The explorations are rendered complete by the discovery of a second tower. It forms the corner of the cemetery, and its scarp juts out at right angles to the line already described, and has a height of upwards of thirty feet. In the corner thus formed, Mr. Maudsley has made a cistern so as to leave the discovery open and visible. This second tower has also a large cistern within, and the steps lead directly to it. The work of the scarp is magnificent, and the appearance it must have presented when standing with its towers above, is well worthy the eulogy of Josephus.

Further exploration has shown a counter-scarp, or opposite scarped side, giving a ditch some twenty feet wide, with a rough rock slope beyond. It is not certain whether this ditch is continuous, and there is certainly none at the western tower. The line of the counter-scarp, where laid bare, is not strictly parallel to that of the scarp. It is possible it may in places be intended to form an extra protection where the rock without the fortress stands higher. This ditch reminds one of the ditch or gutter which Joab crossed in David's siege of Jerusalem, but the side on which that attack was made is uncertain.

Two other interesting details may be mentioned. The method of moving the large stones has been always a matter of doubt. Mr. Maudsley showed me a voussoir, with a hollow cut in the top, similar to the square sunk holes in some of the temple stones. There was a strong

bar of some compound metal resembling lead, but harder, securely cemented across this, to which a hook or cord might be attached. In making his excavations, Mr. Maudsley also lit upon a curious stone die, with numbers not in regular succession. It seems to me to be cogged, by being of irregular shape, for on throwing it a great number of times, the majority read 12, the highest number.

With the boundary wall of the cemetery we reach the confines of Mr. Maudsley's field of operations. A huge mound of rubbish covers the opposite side of the tower. It would be in the highest degree interesting to pursue the work on this side according to the proposal I made in an early report, and the confirmation of my expectations on the west leads me to feel sanguine of results on this side also. There seems little doubt that a gate existed here. A double scarp is visible, and cisterns on the other side, with an artificial line terminating a rocky buttress, makes it almost certain that we should here uncover a third tower, flanking the gate on the east side as the second described does on the west.

From the junction of this tower we should be able, perhaps without mining, but at all events at a depth of less than thirty feet, to follow this rock scarp along from tower to tower over the south-eastern slope of Zion, and to determine the most interesting question on this side, namely, the manner in which the south wall was carried across the Tyropœon valley to that other fortification found by Captain Warren on Ophel.

But though this investigation has yet to be made, a great step has now been secured in the thorough investigation of the scarp, proving beyond doubt that we here see the south-west corner of the ancient Jerusalem. A very useful indication is also afforded in seeking for the position of the royal towers, for the solid bases mentioned by Josephus must, in this case, also be supposed to consist of hewn rock; and the different heights of the bases, thirty, forty, and twenty cubits, would indicate their relative positions with regard to the level of the ground, without the tops of the scarps being naturally considered as upon the same level.

Seal.—A curious seal, lately found in the vicinity of Gaza, is in possession of Dr. De Hass, the American Consul, and he has kindly given me an impression. It represents a human figure with four wings, seemingly like those of a fly or bee, and with a large misshapen human head. In each hand the figure holds an animal resembling an ape, head downwards, being held by the hind leg. Dr. De Hass supposes this to be an effigy of Baalzebub, god of Ekron, to whom apes were sometimes offered. The seal is square, about one inch wide, and the figure in low relief, roughly cut. A similar seal was found some years ago, and is now in England. It represents a fly or mosquito, with an inscription, the equivalent of the Arabic "Allah," perhaps the symbolical effigy of the deity of Ekron.

NOTE (Dec. 2nd, 1874).—*The Vaults Nos.* 1 *and* 3 *Haram Enclosure.* Captain Warren's remark sent to me is as follows:—"Is the masonry at the end of the cistern above or below the line of the rock?" He points out that if it only forms the filling in of the arch, it is no proof that the cistern extends any farther. This sound criticism shows the necessity of accurate writing. The difficulty of seeing is so great without magnesium wire that I cannot speak with absolute certainty as regards No. 1, but as regards No. 3 there is no doubt. The rock walls are not vertical throughout, but curve over at the top, so that the masonry forms only the crown of the arch. The masonry in the cross wall at the northern end of the cistern is visible below the line of the rock, and the cement rendering is not so high as at the sides in parts. In addition to this, the wall is not built at right angles to the line of the cistern, in itself almost a sufficient proof, as it has no connection with the masonry of the voussoirs, which could not, if the cistern here was bounded by the rock, be continued, as they are irrespective of the cross wall. The southern end of each passage is covered with cement to the mouth of the entrance shaft, but there can be little doubt that they do not extend farther in this direction. It is, however, quite possible that the drain from the Sakhrah, being of a cross section, 3ft. × 2ft., may lead into No. 1, and have been stopped and cemented over so as to leave no trace. I may remark that the masonry of the vaulted roof, which is very fine, is exactly similar to that of the double passage, the Twin Pools, and other passages near or in the Haram, but differs from that of the piers of Solomon's stables. C. R. C.

XXIII.

YUTTA CAMP, *November 5th*, 1874.

The Survey has now been in progress for a month on its sixth campaign, during which time we have completed 230 square miles and collected 460 names. The number collected from Halhûl, 258, was beyond any total yet obtained except at Bethlehem, where in about the same area 287 were noted, but in this case the main part were ruined sites, whereas at Bethlehem many were modern buildings. The country is indeed in this part more interesting than in any former campaign, from the number of sites and from the great completeness of the Biblical lists in the tribe of Judah, which as yet have hardly been touched by the Survey. Besides the four important identifications connected with the life of David which I have given in a separate paper, I propose here to give suggestions upon seven sites of more or less interest.

The progress of the work has not been so rapid as in the Jordan valley, but as I find myself unable to stand the fatigue of detail sketching, with all other duties in addition, the field sketchers are reduced to

three. Thus, whereas the monthly rate was seventy square miles per man it is now increased to seventy-six, partly because of continued fine weather and partly from greater practice, but perhaps principally because the country is easier riding and the distances traversed therefore greater. With the assistance of Lieutenant Kitchener, whom we are anxiously expecting, we may hope to reach, or perhaps even to exceed, the former rate of progress.

The health of the party has been fairly good, notwithstanding the very sickly season and the trying alternations of cold west breezes and hot east winds. The Jebel Khalil, where our work lies, is almost the only healthy part of the country just now; we shall remain in it long enough to allow of the first rains thoroughly purifying the lower lands, and then if all goes well descend to the lower deserts of Masada and Engedi, returning to Jerusalem before the heavy rains begin.

With this brief summary of progress I may proceed, first, to the new identifications as the subject of most interest.

1. *Alexandrium.*—The site of this important fortress, which was, Josephus tells us, near Coreæ, has been variously located. It has been already placed at Kefr Istuna, near to the village of Keriút, which lies north of it, and which has been identified with Coreæ. In June last Corporal Armstrong visited the site and discovered the foundations of an important building called El Habs. Two courses of its walls remain perched on a rocky scarp. The stones are all of a very great size, one being eighteen feet in length by three feet eight inches high—equal to the average of the Temple ashlar.

2. *The Rock Etam.*—In a former report from the camp there placed, I put forward the identification of Beit 'Atáb with the rock Etam, a most probable site, considering that the village lies in the limits of that small section of Palestine to which Samson's exploits seems to have been confined. Zorah and Eshtaol, his native country, lie on the opposite side of the great valley which here forms the boundary of the tribe of Judah to the north. The existence of a remarkable rocky knoll on which the modern village stands is also in favour of the site, as is its peculiar position, which, whilst really low compared to the main ridge at the watershed, is yet from its form and the surrounding lower hills a very conspicuous point: thus whilst on one hand it forms a strong defensive position, on the other it is perfectly in accord with the peculiar expression of the Book of Judges, that the men of Judah "came *down* to the Rock Etam."

In studying the subject further I find, however, another confirmation of the theory which has induced me to dwell upon it a second time. The word, which in the English version appears as top—"the top of the rock Etam," Judges xv. 11—has in reality in the Hebrew the signification of "a cleft" (see *Bible Dictionary*, "Etam"). At Beit 'Atab we found an unique style of rock excavation unlike anything we have met elsewhere; it was a rock tunnel running from the middle of the village eastwards for a considerable distance towards the principal spring. I

gave at the time some account of it, and full notes and measurements are now stored up in England. I cannot, therefore, here give details, as I depend only on memory, but I would suggest that this excavation which, from the lamp niches at its entrance and other indications, we judged to be very ancient, is the cleft or cave in which Samson took refuge, and which would so effectually have concealed him from all who were unacquainted with the place that he might have been sought on the very spot for a long time without any one lighting, except by accident, on the entrance of the tunnel. The identification will, I hope, lead subsequently to that of the famous spring of En Hakkore, the site of the slaughter of Philistines with the jaw-bone. It must, from the narrative, have lain in the lower and more open ground, where the Philistines could "spread themselves." It is, therefore, as yet, beyond the limits of the Survey.

3. *Chozeba.*—This town is only once mentioned in the Bible, in the curious list of 1 Chron. iv. 22. It here occurs between the neighbourhood of Mareshah (now Marash, on the borders of the Philistine plain) and the possessions of "Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab." From this indication we should be inclined naturally to place Chozeba in the hill country of Judah. It has, however, in default of information, been supposed identical with Chezib, and this again to be a form of the word Achzib, a city occurring in the list of the towns of Judah situate in the plains near Mareshah.

Whatever may be said as to the identity of Chezib and Achzib, for which I have a new site to propose, I would suggest for Chozeba a ruin of importance which we have lately found north of Halhúil, bearing the name of *Khirbet Kueizibah*, which almost exactly reproduces the Hebrew name. It is a ruin of some interest standing on a hill side with the usual indications of great antiquity. It is, however, better preserved than most, and the walls of many of the houses are standing in parts to the height of eight or ten feet. The masonry is a fine ashlar of very square proportions, the stones being over three feet in height and three to four feet long. Each house seems to have formed a small fortress in itself, so strongly are the foundations built, and a fort or citadel dominates the town. The buildings are probably of Roman date, but the name no doubt preserves that of the city inhabited by "the men of Chozeba." This identification is of interest, as showing an extremely archaic name preserved almost unchanged. The passage in Chronicles says expressly, "and these are ancient things" (ver. 22); it also shows that even the obscurest passages of Scripture are capable of illustration by the Survey, owing to the wonderfully perfect condition in which the manuscripts of the Old Testament seem to have come down to us.

4. *Ma'arath.*—This town, the name of which is almost identical with the Arabic Mogharah (*a cave*), belonged to the list of places lying between Bethlehem and Hebron (Josh. xv. 58). It forms one of a

group of six, of which four are known occurring in the following order:—

Halhul	now Halhúl.
Bethzur	,, Beit Súr.
Gedor	,, Jedúr.
Maarath	,, ...
Beth Anoth	,, Beit 'Ainún.
El Tekon	,, ...

The list seems to give the three western towns going from south to north and then to return to the eastern towns. We should look, therefore, for Ma'arath near to Beit 'Ainún, and here we find that an ancient site occurs south of the last-named village. The valley above which it stands has the name of Wady el Moghair at this special point, though no caves were remarked, the name generally applied to the rest of its course being Wady Nusara. The site itself is scarce distinguishable except by a fine clump of olives, which often form a sure indication of former buildings, as notably at Ai. The site has no known name at the present day, but the local appellation of the wady very probably retains the old name of Ma'arath. This leaves only one of the six cities to be settled, but we have not succeeded in finding anything that answers to the requisites of this site. From position one would, however, be inclined to identify it with Tekú'a, lying in the same district and not mentioned in any of the lists except in the interpolated passage in the Septuagint mentioned in my last report. The Hebrew *Ain* is, however, a stubborn letter and not accustomed to be lost in any change of name. The matter seems to me, therefore, to remain doubtful.

5. *Arab.*—Among the cities of the group surrounding Hebron occurs one of the name of Arab. Unfortunately, out of the list of nine only four are identified, and one of these is very doubtful; the district seems to lie principally west of the capital, and many of the towns lie probably still outside the work as yet completed. East of Hebron a very ancient site was found by Corporal Armstrong, known as Khurbet el 'Arabíyeh (the Arab ruin). It is marked by the existence of many wells and cisterns, and lies near one of the main roads. It may be objected to this identification that the Hebrew *Aleph* is here represented by the stronger form of *Ain*, but we have a notable instance of a precisely similar change in the name of Ascalon, now 'Askelán, and the change is here all the more natural as it gives a meaning to the word in the modern Arabic language.

6. *The Cliff of Ziz.*—This place is only once mentioned, 2 Chron. xx. 16, a passage which I illustrated in my last report. The Bedouin horde from east of Jordan advanced towards Jehosaphat from their camp near to Engedi: "Behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel," which may be properly paraphrased thus: "Behold, they come up by the going up of Ha Ziz, and ye shall find them at the head of

the wady." The word used is Ma'aleh, which in the case of Ma'aleh Akrabbim and Ma'aleh Ha Dummim, has been given correctly by the English translators as "the going up." I have thought it worthy of notice that just south of our Yutta camp is a very large and important ruin known as *Khirbet* 'Aziz. It is a recognised law of change that the *Ain* and the *He* are interchangeable. We find in this, therefore, the name of Ziz preserved. The site is, it may be said, a long way from Engedi, and, indeed, the valleys lying directly east do not run down to the Dead Sea but to the Mediterranean. It is, however, to be noticed that Wady Khubára, the main valley just south of Engedi, runs westward directly towards this ruin, to which the ascent from the Dead Sea shore would be by the course of this large watercourse. Although I do not overlook the difficulties of position, the similarity of name is sufficiently striking to make this worthy of notice. Were Khirbet Aziz an important town in the later Jewish times it is possible that the main valley leading up to it may have been called with propriety "the going up to Haziz" through its entire length of some twenty miles.

7. *Zanoah.*—There were two towns of this name: the one among the fourteen cities of the Shephalah, and identified by Robinson with the present Zanú'a; the other is also in the lot of Judah, and is mentioned among the ten cities south of Hebron. It occurs in the list between Juttah (Yutta) and Cain (Yekin), which it immediately precedes. Dr. Robinson has, however, placed it at Zanúta, to which identification there is an important objection, namely, that Zanúta is in quite a different group of towns immediately in the vicinity of places belonging to the royal city of Debir (now identified with El Dhoheríyeh).

We have, however, just found an ancient site which bears the name of *Khirbet Sa'nút*, the letter "a" in this case being an Aleph. Its position agrees well with that required for Zanoah, being situate immediately west of Khirbet Yekin, which is probably the ancient Cain.

The Limits of the Levitical Cities.—To this important subject we have paid considerable attention since the discovery of the stone at Tell Gezer. The towns of Yutta and Semú'a have been identified by Robinson with Juttah and Eshtemo'a, towns set spart for the Levites. We endeavoured, therefore, to discover traces of the boundaries of these towns as laid down in Numbers xxxv. 4 and 5. The explanation generally given of the passage is, I believe, that it refers to a double enclosure, the inner of which had a breadth or radius of 1,000 cubits, beyond which was an outer boundary measuring 2,000 cubits from the former on every side. This gives a square, the side or diagonal of which, as the case may be, would measure 6,000 cubits, the city being in the centre. The theory proposed by M. Ganneau and by the Americans I understand to be that it was the diagonal which was thus given, and that the four angles of the square pointed to the cardinal

points. We, therefore, scored these points on the traces and found, curiously enough, that in the case of both towns all the points were on hill tops. Our investigations, however, though conducted in the afternoon, when the slanting light is most favourable for seeing incised inscriptions, did not lead to the discovery of any single mark of important or distinct character at these points, and I feel convinced that no inscriptions ever existed there.

So far our efforts were without result, but I may mention an indication at the more southern town, Semú'a, which is not without interest. On the road to Semú'a a stone was pointed out to Corporal Brophy, called *Hajr el Sakháin*, forming the boundary between the lands of Senú'a and the lands of Yutta. It is a little more than 3,000 cubits of sixteen inches north of the centre of the village, but we are not certain that the measurement of the suburbs may not have been taken from the *outside* of the town, which would bring the distance more nearly correct. It is, however, a quarter of a mile east of the theoretical point. On visiting the spot I found two rude marks lately cut in the stone, which is a soft rock, standing upright, and about three feet high. I found three similar stones roughly in line west of the one in question, evidently making the boundary. If this modern boundary is considered to coincide with the Levitical, it follows that the corners of the square are not at the cardinal points, but that the four sides of the square face in these directions, an arrangement which would seem the more natural, especially as we have no recorded instance of the measurement of a diagonal in Jewish architectural descriptions.

To the list of these Biblical identifications we may add those of *Hareth*, *New Ziph*, the *Rock of Maon*, and the *Hill of Hachilah*, *Debir*, the royal city of the Canaanites, and the *upper and lower springs*, giving the respectable number of twelve new identifications of interest, and more or less certain made since we left Jerusalem. The fulness of the lists leads me to hope that we may add to this number a great many more before we leave the territory of the tribe of Judah.

In no part of the country yet visited have we seen so many large and important ruins. The state of preservation in which they are found is superior to that in other districts, which is due to a very simple cause. South of Hebron there are only four inhabited villages, viz., Yutta (our present camp), Semú'a (Eshtemoa), Dura (Adoraim), and the more modern large village of El Dhoheríyeh. The consequence is that fewer stones are required for building purposes, and the ruined sites are left undisturbed. We had, however, the other day a specimen of the manner in which these ruins are gradually disappearing, for no less than four camels were being loaded with stones from the fine ruin of Aziz, intended for the construction of a new house in Yutta.

The following ruins are those most worthy of notice :—

1. *El Rameh*, situate north of Hebron, the traditional site of Abraham's oak at Mamre in the fourth century. The tradition has now been shifted to the Ballútet el Sibta, nearer to the city. A very fine

building exists here east of the Hebron road, called Beit el Khalíl, or Abraham's house. It is an enclosure 214 feet long from east to west, and 162 broad from north to south. The walls are of splendid masonry, stones averaging three and a half feet in height, and some of them eighteen feet in length, whilst others are only fifteen inches in length. In the south-west corner is a well seventeen feet diameter, having a spring of water in it. The masonry is very good, the stones being curved to the form of the circle. Beside it are the remains of a trough, lined with excellent red cement, harder than stone. This large ruin has by some been supposed the remains of the Basilica here built by Constantine, but is rather to be looked upon as the market-place which existed near to the Basilica, and where slaves were sold. The ruin of the Basilica seems to have escaped notice; it exists about fifty yards farther east, but is hardly traceable. Its masonry is inferior to that of the large enclosure, but resembles other specimens of Christian early work in the country. Its breadth was thirty-three feet, and the length of the atrium thirty-eight feet. The apse, however, is quite indistinguishable, so that the total length cannot be ascertained. The corner-stones are rudely drafted and resemble in character those of the great convent which we discovered last year at Deir Kala'ah.

2. *Mogháret Suffa.*—From Halhúl I visited a very remarkable cavern, similar to that at Umm el Tuweinún. It lies near the ruin of Suffa on the side of a great valley leading to the Mediterranean. We had to cross a very difficult valley to reach it, and the native scribe, Na'amán, had a narrow escape of his life. Riding over the slippery ledges of slanting rock is always delicate work; at one point I planted my horse's foot in a bush and passed the slide safely. The native, however, was less careful, his horse slipped and reared, turning round in the air. He had just time to jump off when the beast fell and rolled over twice down the hill side. Though bruised he behaved very well and recovered his horse before it had time to escape. I have noticed since that he dismounts and leads his beast over similar places.

The cave proved to be in the face of a precipice and not attainable by horses; leaving them I had therefore to scramble down some hundred feet and advance cautiously along a narrow ledge of rock to its mouth. The interior was full of flies, and the tunnel turned at right angles to the entrance and descended at a steep slope of about a quarter or one-fifth. My single candle scarce gave any light, the heat was oppressive, and I was in constant expectation of finding a pit-fall or a pool of water. After about forty paces (100 feet) the cave, which was only some seven to ten paces wide, turned again to the right. At this angle I left a light and proceeded cautiously, but now the rushing sound as of a great wind, and the squeaking of innumerable bats, was heard. They flew about my head and nearly extinguished the light. After sixty paces the cave became broader, and I found the pit I had been expecting from experience in other caves. It was, however, not more than twelve to fifteen feet deep, and some twenty paces across. I cautiously

descended part of the way and ascertained that the cave here ended. I was, however, told by the Sheikh of Halhúl that another passage, now choked, led from the pit, and that an iron ring hangs above it in the roof of the cave. The exploration and return to the horses occupied a full hour and proved very fatiguing from the heat and the sudden return to the hot sun and glare from a region of total darkness and bad air. Creeping along these tunnels one imagines oneself to have gone double or three times the distance, and thus the exaggerated accounts of the natives are easily understood.

3. *Umm el 'Amdán.*—West of Yutta, marked on Vandevelde, but apparently never before visited. This is the ruin of an early Christian Byzantine convent, standing in a very large ruin. The chapel is more perfect than usual. It had a nave separated from the side aisles by two rows of four columns. Three are standing on the south side, with an entablature of unmoulded blocks eight feet long in place above. The capitals and other details are very archaic and rudely finished, but evidently belong to an early Byzantine period. The convent occupied an area of about 100 feet square, and contained three good cisterns and some excavated cells in the rock beneath. Only the foundations remain. This site, in common with the three next described, has one peculiarity. In the middle of the ruin in every direction large caves are to be found, the entrance doors carefully cut, five feet broad and eight or nine feet high, with a long passage or shaft, with steps leading down. A semicircular arch occurs at the door in some instances, but the cave within is rough. In one of the largest I found a rock-cut feeding-trough, and am led to suppose that some are stables for cattle, which would have been remarkably plentiful in the district at the time when these flourishing towns existed, as indeed they yet are, and were in David's time, the Negeb, which extends north about as far as Yutta, being a purely pastoral district. Others of these caves are tombs and cells.

4. *'Aziz.*—About half a mile south of Yutta is an even larger ruin, which contains the relics of a church below the town on the east, to which a main street leads. It is marked on no map, and is hidden from view of the main road south, from which most of the sites in the district seem to have been fixed, with more or less hesitation on the part of former travellers. A colonnade leads at an angle in the direction of the church, and a large building with pillars is to be found on the top of the hill; a smaller chapel is also traceable south-west of the church. There is little doubt that the ruins belong to the same period as those of Umm el 'Amdán, but the date of that period has yet to be fixed.

5. *Susieh*, marked on Murray's new map, seems nevertheless not to have been visited. It is the largest ruin in the country, and seems to have been divided into two quarters, each containing a principal building. Though seemingly Christian, it is probably earlier than the former. Its lintel-stones have more correctly classic mouldings, its capitals are more graceful in outline, and, curiously enough, nothing

of a church is discernible. The great western building seems to have been a hall or palace of some kind, fallen pillars, lintel stones, and capitals remaining. It measures in breadth from north to south fifty-one feet, and its total length is a hundred and sixty feet. We made, of course, detailed plans and sketches. South of this building is a wall of stones, much larger than most of the masonry, measuring nine and a half feet long by two and a half high, but not drafted. The building in the eastern quarter is the church, if any existed, but is too much destroyed to be traceable. It seems to have had a cradle vaulted roof, and the doors were surmounted by flat lintels having various ornaments upon them. On one is a Greek inscription, but so battered by age and weather that scarce a letter is distinctly traceable. 'Aziz must have been a very important place in early Christian times, but, like most places in the district, the water supply is derived merely from rain.

6. *Kh. Khoreisa.*—This ruin, which we have so curiously identified with the *Wood of Ziph*, was before entirely unknown, and we had some little difficulty in getting its name in a satisfactory manner. I may remark, however, as adding to the value of the identification, that it did not occur to me until after the name had been settled. Although evidently an ancient site, with bell-mouthed cisterns, which generally date long before Christian times, Kh. Khoreisa seems to have been an important town in the Christian period. The ruins of a church are traceable, a basilica, eighty-four feet long, including an atrium of fifteen feet six inches, the breadth being thirty-nine feet six inches, and the width of the nave sixteen feet, with two rows of three pillars. Only the foundations and fallen shafts remain, but there is a lintel eight feet nine inches in length, once over the west door, having an almost illegible Greek inscription on it. Our paper being very bad, we did not succeed in taking a proper squeeze. Corporal Armstrong, however, copied the letters on the day he discovered it, and I again made an independent copy, after carefully cleaning the stone. The result was as below.

ΛΥΤΗΙΙΤΙ
ΗΤΟΥΚΥ
ΙΟΥΔΙΚΑΙ
ΙΕΙϹ ΛΕΥϹ
ΤΕΝΑΥ ΙΗ

The most valuable part of the inscription, which seems to have been only a text or religious sentence, are the two letters IH, which occur in a corner, not on the tablet bearing the rest, but to the right, parallel with the last line. These are no doubt the date, and, when the era from which they are to be counted is determined, they will serve to fix, not only the date of this particular building, but also the century to which a large number of very similar ruins in Palestine is to be attributed—a period which I find, on visiting England, is still in dispute between eminent architects.

7. *Khirbet el Mintar.*—In addition to the ruins thus enumerated, a small basilica exists at this ruin, north-west of 'Aziz. The pillars are still standing, and the details of the lintels show the work to be of the same period.

Thus, within an area of some fifty square miles we find (including Kurmul) the ruins of no less than eight basilicas, all of which were previously unknown or unexamined. Northwards there are several more, and farther south there are others. We find evidence of an extensive Christian settlement at an early period, probably the fifth and sixth centuries, and of towns of considerable magnitude. Indeed, this district, which has hitherto been almost unknown, must then have supported a large population. Nothing is more striking than the large number of Christian ruins in Palestine; four-fifths of the total number of ruined sites in the country are probably to be attributed to Byzantine or Crusading periods. The general impression of great antiquity in the ruins of Palestine is certainly a false one, however ancient the localities may be. M. Ganneau's excavation at El Medyeh is only another instance of the probably late period to which remains supposed to be Jewish are to be attributed, and confirms, as do many other facts which I hope some day to bring forward, the theory as to the special form of tomb at El Medyeh which I advanced in an early report. In every case where indications of any sort are available these tombs have proved to be Christian.

8. *Kurmul.*—This interesting site, which has been hardly visited of late years, shows the ruins of a very important site of Christian times. There are no less than three buildings which might be churches. The first, to the north, is unmistakable. Its apses are clearly visible, and it measures seventy-seven by forty-five feet. Over the door was a curious lintel, with geometrical ornamentation more florid than usual. The second building is immediately east of the famous Crusading tower, the two are contained within the same *enceinte*, and are surrounded with a sloping revetment. This great building is within 3° of the true east and west line, and had two rows of columns one foot ten inches diameter. If a church, it was a very large one, compared with the others, being ninety-nine feet in total length. The Crusading tower requires no notice; it is of the ordinary character, and we carefully measured and planned it. Sixty-three by forty-eight feet exterior measurement, and twenty-four feet from the top to the *Chemin des rondes*. Its walls are seven feet thick. A round birket of masonry, twenty-eight feet eight inches diameter, exists on the north side. Farther south than the tower is a third colonnade building, measuring seventy by forty feet, apparently also a basilica with an atrium.

9. *Semû'a.*—This is the most interesting of all the group here mentioned, and gives evidences of great antiquity. We had some little difficulty with the pious population, who took umbrage at Corporal Brophy's proceedings in booking the names of all objects in their vicinity. Seven strapping fellows suggested to him that he was a dog,

a pig, an infidel, and other objectionable similes, and made attempts to drag the guide from his mule. They seem even to have had some thoughts of stoning the corporal, as their numbers were superior, but he prudently produced a revolver, which had some effect, and retreated to camp to report the amenities which he had experienced. As good luck would have it, the sheikh of the village just then rode into Yutta, and I sent the native soldiers to capture him, and explained that he would have to proceed under escort to Hebron as surety for the appearance of the four chief offenders, whose names we got from the guide. The consternation produced throughout our village by this arrest was considerable, and the whole family of sheikhs came to beg off their fellow in misfortune; but it seems to me a rule, for the safety of the Survey party, to show not the least mercy in similar cases. The old gentleman, who was quite unconscious of the affair, did, however, succeed in making his escape from the soldier who kept him, and from whose wages I deducted the amount which I thought it likely the sheikh could afford as a bribe for his liberty; for the soldier did not respond to my proposal that he should confess the exact amount.

A letter to the Kaimakam of Hebron resulted in the immediate imprisonment of the four offenders, and I took the corporal to Hebron in case he was required as a witness. We found the Kaimakam a very civil little Beyroutine, and he showed us a French and English New Testament which he could read, and expressed a wish for an Arabic version. The only legal proceeding was his asking me how long I wished the culprits kept in prison, which I left to him to decide, knowing it to be only a question of their pecuniary condition at the time.

The next day we went down to Semú'a, and made some show of measuring up the ruins and writing notes in the centre of the village, keeping up an interesting conversation, and ignoring altogether the assembled villagers, who looked at us with mingled fear and sulkiness. On the next day but one we again visited the village, and did more measuring, the people looking on from the house-tops.

By these means I hope to have induced these good Moslems to believe that, whether pigs or dogs, we are strong enough to carry matters our own way, and to put a stop to any remarks or signs of hostility.

The site thus held precious in the eyes of its inhabitants impresses one as the most ancient and important we have yet seen; but there are two periods to its buildings, and it is not easy to say decidedly to which some of the buildings belong. The whole site stands on the summit of a hill, and spreads principally east and west. In the centre are the remains of a castle almost perfect, and used as a sheikh's house at the present day. The ashlar of its walls is fine, though small. It has an archway which is most properly described as elliptical. The general appearance is that of a Crusading or mediæval fortress of some description.

The main ruins lie west of the inhabited part of the village, but

throughout its extent the houses stand amongst foundations of noble masonry. The stones are of those peculiarly long and narrow dimensions which we are accustomed to consider as a mark of Jewish work; many of them are eight to twelve feet in length, but under three feet in height. Some are smooth dressed, others have large rustic bosses. One of the largest areas has on the east a doorway with a great lintel above, and a relieving arch of small masonry above it. This disposition seems a mark of early Byzantine work, but does not prove the large masonry to belong to that period. Two lintels we remarked, the first having the vine pattern, the second a very archaic form of two half circles, with pilasters of equally ancient design. These details resemble closely the ornamentation of the tombs near that of Joshua at Tibneh, and for this reason I was inclined to look on them as Jewish. It must not, however, be forgotten that the vine pattern is found in the Hauran and eastern ruins of a considerably later date. There are many rough cave tombs on all sides of the village, and one is peculiar, having a pointed masonry arch over its door. Several other tombs seem to have had buildings above them. The number of wells, or rather cisterns, for the only supply is rain water, is very great—there must be forty or fifty in all.

South-west of the village, at some little distance, is an interesting little monument called El Bantah, a word which I am informed means a tomb in this southern dialect. It is a square building twenty feet side, standing on four steps, two feet tread and one foot six inches rise. Four attached pilasters are visible on each wall, with capitals which are not easily described, but which are probably early Byzantine. The total height is about eighteen feet, the roof either a dome, or more probably a cradle vault. From comparison with other ruins, I came to the conclusion that this building is a tomb resembling others in the north of Palestine. This is strengthened by the discovery of the foundations of a second similar building farther west, having its door on the north, and a rock-cut entrance to a vault beneath each of the other three walls. The disposition is therefore not unlike those of the tomb at El Medyeh.

XXIV.

El Dhoheriyeh, *15th November*, 1874.

The Ordnance Survey has at length touched its southern boundary, and will, I hope, soon be extended all along it. An area of about 300 square miles lies beyond the southern limits of the Hebron and Gaza sheets to the line of the great boundary valleys, Wady el Seb'a and Wady Seyal. From our present camp we organised a small expedition to fill in the country between Tell el Milh (the ancient Moladah) and Bir el Seb'a (Beersheba). This area, including the two plains, Sahel el

Butín and Sahel el Fer'ah, has never been thoroughly explored. It is about 120 square miles in extent, and Murray's new map contains *six names* within its limits.

The number which we succeeded in collecting reaches *a total of fifty-five*, so that it will be seen there was plenty of scope for the Survey, without mentioning the great inaccuracy of the maps, places being fixed many miles from their actual position. The work was attached to the rest of the Survey by means of two fine triangles, which fix the positions of Tell el Seb'a and Tell S'aweh.

In addition to this we took observations for latitude and time, both at Khirbet Bir el Seb'a, within fifty yards of the great well, and on the next day at our camp close to Tell el Milh. The principal sites of interest are seven in number, viz., Tel el Seb'a, Bir el Seb'a, El Meshash, Tell el Milh, El Ghurra, Sa'weh, and Hora. I propose to give an abstract of our notes on each.

Tell el Seb'a.—This large double tell, standing at the junction of Wady Khalíl and Wady el Seb'a, is a point conspicuous on all sides, yet seems to have escaped notice. It has a well within one-fourth of a mile west of it, separate entirely from the wells of Beersheba, and situate on the south bank of the valley.

On the top of the tell are a collection of Arab graves, but lower down towards the east are traces of a considerable ruin. I would suggest that in this we have the solution of the difficulty found in the list of the towns of Simeon, where Sheba (Shb'a) occurs immediately after Beersheba, and between it and Moladah. The site of Tell el Seb'a is within two miles of Beersheba on the direct line to Moladah (Josh. xix. 2). There is a considerable dam, now ruined, across Wady Khalil below the tell, and traces of reservoirs to contain the water so collected.

Kh. Bir el Seb'a.—The site of these famous wells has never before been fixed with any amount of accuracy. The positions on various maps are as follows:—

Robinson . .	Lat. 31°.14′	Long. 34°.56′
Vandevelde . .	,, 31 .16	,, 34 .54 .30″
Palmer . . .	,, 31 .13	,, 34 .48
O. S. . . .	,, 31 .14	,, 34 .47

Mr. Palmer's position is the most nearly correct, being only about half a mile wrong in longitude. In latitude he is one mile and three quarters too far south. From this it is evident that, whereas the compass angles of his route sketch come very nearly correct, the great distance of the starting-point has made the method of calculating distance by time give an appreciable error. The work, however, cannot fail to be considered very good of its kind, and contrasts favourably with Vandevelde, who is six and three quarter miles too far east in his longitude, and one and a half miles too far north in latitude.

The ruins at Beersheba are extensive. They seem to belong to early Christian times, and a church stood close to the dry eastern well, a

tesselated pavement being remarkably close to the bank of the valley. There are remains of hard burnt bricks—very thin and of red hard cement—in what appears to be a large cistern; but every ruin has been razed to its very foundations, and little of the town is to be seen beyond the heaps of rolled pebbles and flint, which are strewn on every side, with a few cut stones of the hill limestone.

The houses must have been made of these flints built up with some sort of mortar or mud, and were no doubt perishable structures. The place must, however, at one time have been of considerable importance.

The wells are three in number, two containing water. There are also some ruined cisterns for rain water, now filled up, but the Arabs did not know of more wells than those we saw, and the fourth near Tell el Seb'a.

The central well was the one at which we camped. The distance to the water we found to be thirty-seven feet, and the diameter of the well twelve feet three inches. It is well built, of regular courses, with stones from eight inches to eighteen inches in length, which have their faces cut to the curve of the circle. There are numerous channels worn in the lip of the well by the constant friction of the ropes drawing buckets for the watering of flocks, herds, and camels. It is curious that no former traveller appears to have noticed an inscription, built in evidently its proper place, in the fourteenth course of the masonry on the south side. The form of the letters approaches more closely to modern Arabic than to Cufic. The word *Allah* is distinct, and seems followed by *Mohammed*—a sentence probably containing the expression "Apostle of God Mohammed."

An Arabic 5 and a cypher, and probably another 5 (though imperfect) occur above, giving 505 AH. This would place the date of the present masonry in the twelfth century, thus sadly contradicting the romantic fancy that the great furrows may have been first traced by the ropes of the followers of the first Patriarch, who dug the well.

The other well, on the west, is much smaller (five feet in diameter). The dry eastern well we found to be nine feet two inches in diameter, and twenty-three feet deep, the bottom being filled with large stones.

Beersheba was a considerable place in the time of Jerome, and later on an episcopal city under Jerusalem. The ruins are probably attributable to this period.

El Meshash.—The course of Wady el Seb'a seems never to have been followed, for on no other supposition can I account for the loss of such an important site.

El Meshash is about three miles west of Tell el Milh, and lies at the foot of the white chalk peaks of El Ghur. It is hidden in the valley and by the rolling ground, and thus not visible even a few hundred yards away. We came upon it suddenly, and found besides the ruin, which is considerable, but resembles the others in this part of the country, two wells, each full of water, and surrounded by great crowds of thirsty animals.

El Meshash has a meaning in Arabic of "the finger joint." Dr. Robinson, who however never heard of this site, gives another meaning of the word, a "water pit" or small pool. The word is not uncommonly used among the Arabs with this signification, and applied to several other localities, as Wady Meshash, 'Ain Meshash, &c., &c., whence one is led to suspect that the name is the corruption of some ancient title, as the site is evidently old and important. The list of Simeon in this part of the country contains the following names:—

Moladah.	Hazar Shual.
Hazar Gaddah.	Sheba.
Heshmon.	Beersheba.
Beth Palet.	

For all of these, except Beth Palet, which is doubtful, we may, it will be seen, now propose identifications; some new, some confirmations of those already proposed.

It will be seen that only one site, and that probably on the hills at El Ghurra, intervenes between Heshmon and Moladah. Moladah being undoubtedly Khirbet el Milh, the site of Heshmon would be very well placed at El Meshash, and the similarity of the names seems to me sufficiently near when the fact of the Arabic being twisted into a word of ordinary signification is borne in mind.

Tell el Milh.—This is a large and important site, a tell conspicuous in the middle of the Sahel Fer'ah, having Arab graves on the summit, whilst an extensive ruin stretches on the south, consisting of mounds, some with hewn stones, some strewn with flint blocks, others merely of earth. There are two wells, one dry the other containing water at a depth of more than forty feet. The Arabs here, almost naked and without any head-dress, drawing water furiously in time to a rude chant, were some of the wildest fellows we have yet seen; but, although at first they demanded backsheesh, they soon got tired of being completely ignored, and went back to their work of water drawing, or driving off the immense flocks which seem to thrive on nothing in these broad plains, destitute in the autumn, when we visited them, of even a single green leaf.

The water proved to be slightly brackish, perhaps from layers of salt in the strata, or perhaps from the filthy condition of the mud round the wells, through which the spilt water filters back into the porous rock, and so again into the well.

El Ghurra.—This appears to be El Jurra on Vandevelde's map, but is not shown by Professor Palmer, who places S'aweh nearly on its site. El Ghurra is visible from Tell el Milh, but S'aweh, which is three miles north on another range, is not visible from any point in Professor Palmer's second route. From its position close to Tell el Milh, we should be inclined to place at this important site the town of Hazar Gaddah. This identification was first proposed by Mr. Grove for the Jurrah of Vandevelde, and he remarks that the change of D into R is not uncom-

mon in Semitic words, in addition to which we have the extreme similarity of the two letters in square Hebrew, and a certain amount of likeness in Aramaic, either of which would account for an error of transcription.

The point which is most strongly in favour of the identification is the character of the site. Hazar means an "enclosure," and may therefore be supposed to refer to a walled town. El Ghurra stands on a high, almost isolated marl peak, with precipitous sides.

The ruins include three reservoirs, two caves, and buildings of large blocks of flint, and the whole site is surrounded by a wall built also of blocks of flint, thus fully meriting the prefix Hazar.

S'aweh.—This also is a similar site on a high bluff, with an isolated tell north-east of the ruin. It has been identified with Hazar Shu'al, and a confirmation of the identification here also exists in a city wall surrounding the site, as at Ghurra, and built also of large flint blocks. The list of identifications stands, therefore, thus :—

Moladah	Tell el Milh.
Hazar Gaddah . . .	El Ghurra.
Heshmon	El Meshash.
Hazar Shual . . .	S'aweh.
Sheba	Tell el Seb'a.
Beersheba	Khirbet Bir el Seb'a.

El Hora.—This important site corresponds in name to none of the towns in the list of Simeon, or of the southern cities of Judah. From position it might very well be Beth Palet, "or house of flight," a name appropriate either from its being beyond the plains, or, as will be seen, from its strongly fortified character, but if so the name seems lost. The signification in Arabic of its present title is connected with the drawing of water, for the place is remarkable for the number of its cisterns and reservoirs. The buildings are of flint throughout, the pieces being rudely squared. They average three or four feet in length, and are no doubt of the natural thickness of the flint layer which here lies at the top of the white marl.

How they were cut there is nothing to show, but they may possibly date from very early times, being almost imperishable. There is nothing distinctive about the character of the buildings, but one peculiarity in the site not noticed by former travellers I have never remarked in any other ruin in Palestine. It consists in five small outlying forts which surround the town. Hora stands on a low, white marl hill, and the outer forts, at a distance of less than a mile, are placed also on low eminences.

They are called by the natives Kasúr el Mehafseh.

Adadah.—I may add to this report a valuable identification as giving an indication of the district where a large number of unknown sites are to be found. In the south of Judah ten cities are mentioned (as correctly counted) between Kabseel, the first on the whole list, and Kerioth (probably the present Kuretein). Adadah stands sixth, or about the middle

of the group. According to Smith's dictionary it has never been traced. Murray's new map gives the ruin of 'Ad'adah, exactly corresponding with the Hebrew word, as near Tuweirah el Foka. I find from the Arabs that this town does really exist, though marked on the map as doubtful. It is, no doubt, the ancient Adadah, and this leads us to look for the group in their proper place, the district west of the southern part of the Dead Sea.

Some of them may probably come within our limits in the district round Tell Arad. This identification makes the fifth either newly discovered or confirmed by the Survey out of the list of towns in the lot of Simeon, without counting the probability of identity between Beth Palet and Hora.

Geology.—The Beersheba plains consist of a rich marly soil, which, with irrigation, would become extremely fruitful. The climate seems healthy, and a great field for civilisation might be found in the colonisation of this remote district, in preference to the stony hills of Judæa, which generally attract more attention. The strata here all belong to the white marl, and the hills are capped by dark flint bands. On the southern slopes of the spur, which terminates in Tell el Ghur, we found the same brown limestone which throughout the Jordan valley caps the marl. The high hills of the Debir district, the Negeb, or dry land of Ziph, Maon, and Eshtemoa, consist of the soft, white, porous limestone, with flint nodules, so often before noted.

The unconformity with the chalk is well marked in a north and south section from Hebron to Moladah, confirming what I have formerly written on the subject.

The dry character of this district is entirely explained by the thickness of the porous strata which forbids the existence of springs.

The value of the Survey work in these districts, now including the recovery of some twenty biblical sites, as yet unknown or very doubtfully identified, cannot fail to be generally appreciated.

CLAUDE R. CONDER, Lieut. R.E.

MR. TYRWHITT DRAKE'S REPORT.

XIX.

CAMP, JERUSALEM, *May*, 1874.

[The following was found among Mr. Drake's papers after his death]:—

The Ghor or Jordan valley is now happily finished. It was one of the districts where we might have experienced considerable difficulties, both on account of the climate, the unsettled population, and the difficulty of procuring supplies. The exceptionally cool season was much in our favour, though the frequent rains somewhat delayed us. The abundant herbage served as fodder for our horses and mules—no slight item, when

I say that barley was 40 to 43 piasters the midd at Nablus, the usual price being 7 to 9; while, two years ago, I bought it in the Hauran for 3½.

From all the Arabs and Fellahín in the Ghor we experienced nothing but civility. As little seems to be known of these tribes, I here give a list of them, beginning at the extreme south of Palestine, and going up to the Sea of Tiberias along the western side of the Jordan. The number of tents and men is averaged from the numbers given me by different Bedawin. I do not here give the many clans (Arabic—*Tawayf*, *hamyh*, or *ashíret*) into which they are subdivided, as I hope at a future period to publish a list of all the tribes in Palestine, with their Wasúm, or tribe marks.

TENTS.	MEN.	TRIBE.
—	—	El Tyyáhah } in the Desert of the Tíh.
—	—	El Terabín }
—	—	El 'Azázimeh.
—	—	El Dhullám.
100	150	El Jehalín, south of Hebron.
50	70	El Ka'abineh, in Masferah, south of Hasása, and north-east of Hebron.
60	100	El Rashaideh, near 'Ain Jidi.
360–400	1000	El Ta'amirah, south of Bayt Lahm, and Mar Saba.
150	200	El Abbaydíyeh, serfs of the monastery of Mar Saba.
120	150	El Hetaymát.
250	300	El Sawáharet el Wad.
50	80	El Abu Nusayr.
100	150	El 'Abíd, serfs of the last, who live near Ain el Sultán.
50	100	El Ka'abineh, north of Wady el 'Awjeh.
110	180	El Mesa'ayd (under an Emir), in Wady el Far'ah, and east of Nablus.
—	—	El Belawni } from east of Jordan, but usually
—	—	El Fahaylát } have a few tents in the Ghor near
—	—	El Sardíyeh } Wady el Maleh.
150	400	El Sakr, near Baysan, and in Wady Jálúd.
60	100	El Ghazawíyeh (under an Emir), east of Baysan.
40	70	El Beshatwi, near Jisr el Mujámi'a.
35	60(?)	S'khúr el Ghor, south of the Sea of Tiberias.

The pasturage of Wady Fusaïl belongs to the Fellahín of Mejdel, Beni Fádhil. The three clans of the village Tubás are the Deraghmeh, the Sawaftah, and the Fok-hah. Of these, the two first leave their houses in early spring, and live in tents like the Bedawín, pasturing their herds in Wady el Maleh and Wady Khashneh respectively.

A very large number of tells are found in the Jordan valley, on the great plain of Esdraelon, and a few on the Maritime Plain. I am inclined to look upon them as of very early date, and consider them as marking the site of ancient towns, or at least of their Acropolis, but

cannot at all countenance the theory that they are formed by the *débris* of bricks laid out to dry in the sun. Consisting as they do of from 1,000 to 10,000 tons of earth, this idea seems to me untenable. Again, their steep slopes show that they were heaped up with an eye to utilising them as strongholds. The sun-dried bricks found in them at 'Ain el Sultan by Captain Warren, and at Tell el Salahíyeh, near Damascus, are not broken up, but regularly packed, and laid with mud instead of mortar, which tends to prove that sun-dried bricks were used in their construction to give them solidity. If they were composed only of *débris* and faulty bricks, where are the ruins of the good bricks used in construction, which must have exceeded the others in bulk, but of which no trace other than the tells is to be seen?

The fact that they are almost invariably found near a good supply of water, and always in open plains, or at the mouths of passes where there is no natural elevation suitable for fortresses, is to me conclusive proof that they were thrown up for the purposes of defence. A considerable part of the surface is doubtless due to the decay of the buildings which stood upon them, but the basis must have been prepared.

Many of the tells which are identified with ancient sites, such as Tell Kaymún, Tell 'Arád, Tell el Kadhi, Tell Dothán, Tell Jezer, Tell el Milh, and Tell el Husn at Baysan, Tell Thora, Tell Lejjún, and Tell el Semak, are natural mounds or extremities of spurs running down from the hills, which have been cut and trimmed into the desired shapes. This may perhaps tend to show that the isolated tumuli of the plains belong to a period anterior to the Jewish invasion. They differ much in shape from the gradually accumulated heaps on which the villages in Egypt are built, being more regular and very much steeper. If this be considered in conjunction with the fact that in Egypt rain is very rare, while in Palestine it is heavy, it will, I think, sufficiently prove that they are artificial constructions for a definite purpose. In the hill country such fortifications would be impossible and unnecessary, but the villages and ruins are very frequently—especially in the district south of Jerusalem—built on isolated knolls, entirely occupying the summits of them.

Crusading fortresses.

A line of crusading fortresses seems to have run along each side of western Palestine. Between Jerusalem and Jericho is the castle of Tel'at el Damm. On the summit of Jebel Kuruntil is another; the ruins at Kurn Sartabeh lie in such confusion that it is impossible to assign any date to them. The large bossed stones, however, may possibly have been crusading work. The next point northwards is Burj el Maleh, from which both Kawkab el Hawa, north of Baysan, and Kal'at el Rabad, east of the Jordan, are visible.

Kawkab el Hawa seems to have been a crusading castle captured by Saladin, in A.D. 1188, and built by King Fulke, about A.D. 1140 (cf. Robinson, "Bib. His." iii. 227). The masonry of the outer walls is very fine, and cut out of compact basalt. It is superior to the work at

Athlît, which is, however, only limestone. The position is a very fine one, commanding as it does the whole of Wady Jálúd, from Zera'in eastwards, and the Jordan valley from the Lake of Tiberias to some distance south of Baysan. Two springs run under the cliffs to the south, about 500 yards from the fort. The most northern has a temperature of 71 degrees, and is slightly brackish; it is preferred to the other, which is cool and sweet, but which has the reputation of producing fever. Over this second spring is a rude Arabic inscription on a basaltic boulder. I have not yet been able to decipher it, but it seems merely to relate the finding or digging of the spring by a certain Emír.

Baysan: Bethshean, or Scythopolis.

The ruins of Baysan have been so frequently described that I shall only mention one or two points which may be new. Near Tell el Husn, the mound of the fortress, I discovered a fine H shaped vault of Roman masonry, and the façade of a temple built of great blocks of nummulitic limestone, which must have been brought from a great distance, containing one large central niche, and a smaller one on each side, as though for statues. This portion of the ruins is almost concealed by rubbish, and would in all probability repay excavation. On the north side of the river Corporal Armstrong discovered two subterranean tombs of masonry, with domed roofs, now, however, fallen in. They are interesting, and similar to that tomb (El Kasr) near Tíyasír described by Lieutenant Conder, though much coarser and ruder in execution and finish.

Jami'a el Arb'aín, Baysan.

Jami'a el Arb'aín is a ruined mosque with a broken tower near the modern village. Over the mihrab is a large block of stone, with a very rudely-cut inscription, which I thus translate, two or three words being quite unintelligible, "In the name of God . . . . through God, when the end of the building was accomplished by the ransom (?) of 'Akka: the blessing of God be perfected, and prayers in it upon . . . . Mohammed: and the completion was in the year . . . and ninety and a hundred." (A.D. 806).

Greek inscription.

The following inscription I copied in July, 1872, and mentioned it in a report of that date. As it was not then printed, and the stone has since been done away with, I send another copy of it:

ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟC ΟΜΕΓΑΛ
ΤΗΝ ΚΡΗ ΙΔΑΕΠΟΙΗC
ΕΡΓΟΝ ΤΟΥΕΜΒΟΛ
ΕΤΔΕ Λ ΝΕ.

I have made several sections of the mouldings to the bases of the principal columns near the theatre, where most of the finest buildings seem to have stood, and these will probably be sufficient to determine their date.

The position of Baysan is very fine. Situated on the edge of the cliffs which descend from Wady Jalúd to the Ghor, it catches the sea breeze, and even in the middle of summer is cooler than many other places that are situated at a greater elevation. Water is everywhere abundant, and with such a climate, indigo, cotton, sugar, cereals, and

all kinds of vegetables, might be easily grown. Under a fostering government, this miserable village of squalid half-bred Egyptians would soon become a thriving city. It lies, too, on one of the main routes to the extreme east, and should a railroad ever be made to Persia, the line from Akka or Haifa through Baysan will commend itself, perhaps, even before that from Tyre through the Buka'a, and certainly to unprejudiced persons before that of Alexandretta and Aleppo.

Abel Mehola. Abel Mehola is mentioned in Judges vii. 22, as a place to which the Midianites fled in their panic from Gideon: the term here used is literally "to the lip of Abel Mehola," and to this I shall presently advert. In 1 Kings iv. 12, the place is mentioned in conjunction with Bethshean. There is a ford over Jordan, some five miles north-east of Jericho, called Makhádhet Umm Enkhola, but this seems much too far south. However, there is a Mazár, or Moslem chapel, on the east of Jordan, about eight and a half miles south-east of Baysan, called Sherhabíl—or, as one man named it to me, Shefa Habíl, which would mean the lip of Habil. I asked many of the Arabs what the place was, but the only answer I could get was, that it was a Mazár, and called Sherhabíl, but why they did not know. One of the Ghazawíyeh Arabs told me that it was the tomb of a certain Shaykh Mohammed Sherhabíl, but this seemed a palpable invention for my special delectation, as none of his companions had ever heard of such a person. Eusebius places Abel Mehola at a place called Abelmea, eight miles from Baysan, which agrees well enough with this site.

Zarthan. Zarthan (1 Kings iv. 12; vii. 46) is mentioned as being below Jezreel, and near Baysan. Between it and Succoth were the clay grounds in which Solomon cast the brass utensils for the temple services. Hitherto no trace of the name has been found. The reading of the Alexandrine Codex seems, however, to throw a light on the subject. Here we have Σιαραμ, and there is a very conspicuous and unusually large mound three miles south of Baysan, called Tell *Sarem*, a name identical with that in the Greek text. There is a good deal of clay to be found also between this place and Dabbet Sákút, which may, I think, be accepted as Succoth. Zarthan is also mentioned (Josh. iii. 16) as near the city Adam; the proper rendering here is, "and the waters which came down from above rose up upon a heap very far off by Adam, the city which is beside Zarthan" (see Bib. Dict. sec. v. Adam). The meaning of Adam is *red earth*. Near Tell Sarem, one mile to the south, is Khirbet el Hamrath, the Red River, which may not impossibly be a translation of the old name. The colour of the soil in this district is also pointed out by the name of a ford near Dabbet Sákút—this is Makhadhet el Imghár (red earth). It has been suggested that the waters of the Jordan were suddenly dammed up by a landslip or similar convulsion; the adherents of this theory might perhaps point to the present appearance of the banks and the curious bends of the river near this place in support of their idea.

Adam.

A few other ancient sites and their supposed identifications may

well be mentioned here. A mound, marked Umm el Ashera, is found on Van de Velde's map and quoted by Dr. Tristram (Topography H. Land, p. 219), but all inquiries among the Arabs failed to show it me. None of them had ever heard of such a place. In Robinson, however, I found it Um-el-'Ajra, and this gave me the clue, and I then saw how Tell el Ma'ajerah had been corrupted into Umm el Ashera.

Ænon and Salim (John iii. 23) have been identified by Van de Velde as Bír Salím and Shaykh Salím. Inquiries of the Arabs and fellahín of the district resulted in not a man of them having ever heard of either of these places. Salim is mentioned by Eusebius as being 8 R.M. from Baysan to the south. I can only imagine that there is a mistake in the distance, and that Tell Sarem, which I have proposed above for Zarthan, must be the place intended.

There are a very large number of springs about here, and it is emphatically a place "where there is much water."

Meroz and Beth Shittah are, I think, without doubt, Marassas and Shatta, two villages occupying important positions on the summits of knolls, to the north of Wady Jálúd. Dr. Tristram speaks of "a large inhabited village, Kefrah, with many Jewish ruins, and apparently the remains of a large synagogue." At present it is uninhabited, the small ruins are quite modern, consisting of rough stones and mud, while hardly a dressed stone is to be found in the place, and there is no trace of a large building of any kind.

A considerable extent of Wady Jálúd and the Ghor is under cultivation, but the chief wealth of the district consists in flocks and herds. Of these the greater part belongs to the Sagr Arabs. From one point may often be seen several herds, containing from one to three hundred head of cattle, besides innumerable sheep and goats and a fair sprinkling of camels and horses; of these latter the tribe formerly possessed a large number, and freely harried their neighbours by their means till their power was broken some seven or eight years ago by Mohammed Saïd, then Pasha of Nablus. Since then they have remained quiet, but are gradually recommencing their marauding habits under the present impotent government of Nablus.

Antipatris. The satisfactory identification of Antipatris in face of the various conflicting accounts seems now impossible. The usual site assigned to it is Kefr Saba. Kal'at Ras el 'Ain was first proposed, I believe, by Major Wilson, and by Herr Shick, of Jerusalem. The evidence in Josephus seems to me slightly in favour of the latter position, as do the distances given in the Itineraries, but the ancient name of Capharsabe points to the modern Kefr Saba. The following table shows the distances:—

	Antipatris.	Kefr Saba.	Ras el 'Ain.
Jerusalem	38 (42 R.M.)	40½	35
Cæsarea	24½ (26 R.M.)	23	28½
Lydda.	9½ (10 R.M.)	16	10½

From Kefr Saba a ditch eighteen miles long is said to have been dug (Ant. xiii. 15. 1) to the sea, or shore of Joppa (B. J. 1. iv. 7). There is a manifest error in this distance, which will only touch the sea either south of Jaffa or north of Nahr el Fálik. This ditch did not serve its purpose, and is said to have been filled up; so that we can hardly imagine it to have been a work of any magnitude. No trace whatever of any ditch is to be seen west of Kefr Saba, where the ground consists of rolling hills of sandy loam. At the commencement of the Survey, in 1872, I noticed a ditch falling into the 'Awjeh, near the village of Jerísheh, and running in the direction of Ras el 'Ain, at the foot of the low hills south of the 'Awjeh bridge. It does not, however extend for much more than a mile. Antipatris is said to have been near the mountains, a description which applies equally well to the rival sites. It is said to have been well watered, and to have had a river flowing round the city (J. Ant. xvi. 6. 2). This cannot apply to Kefr Saba, but does to Ras el 'Ain. The goodness of soil applies equally well to both, but the presence of a grove of large trees round it seems to point to Kefr Saba, to the east of which still exist the remains of the forest which formerly covered all the low hills on the Maritime Plain between Carmel and Jaffa.

An old man of the neighbouring village of Jeljúlyeh told me that he had heard that the ancient name of Kefr Saba was Antifatrús, but of course a statement of this kind is not of much value.

It is perhaps not impossible that formerly Capharsabe stood at the fountains of the 'Awjeh; for it is remarkable that such an important position should only be called the "Fountain-head," and that subsequently it was transferred, name and all, to the position it now occupies. Such a solution may appear forced, but in face of the conflicting evidence above quoted seems to me the only solution of the difficulty.

In 1 Chron. vii. it is curious to compare the proper names with those of villages existing at the present day; for instance, in Benjamin, Anathoth and Alameth with the modern Anata and 'Almít; in Manasseh, Ulam with the village of 'Awlam (in this case, however, the initial Hebrew Aleph is changed into the Arabic 'Ain). In Ephraim, Zabad and Uzzensherah with Kefr Zibád and Bayt Sira.

En route from Kefr Saba to Jerusalem, I visited the village of Mejdel Yaba, or Mejdel et Sádik as it is sometimes called, in order to copy the Greek inscription said to exist there. It is in a winged tablet on the lintel of a door on the right-hand side as you enter the Shaykh's palace—for the building he occupies is nothing less—and is founded on an older fort, having three bastions to the west. The arch over the inscription, which faces eastwards, is semicircular, with a keystone; the masonry is good. Inside the doorway the arch is very slightly pointed, and the barrel vault of the chamber, which seems to have been the ground floor of a corner tower, is seemingly of later date. The inscription is in bold letters, some four inches long, and runs thus:

MAPTTPIONTOT
AΓIOYKHPYKOT

A few yards N.W. of the Shaykh's dwelling is a fragment of ruin, to all appearance of Crusading date.

An English gentleman, a civil engineer, is now engaged, at his own expense, in making many alterations and improvements in the Bishop's School on Zion. The run of this scarped rock, which he has laid bare in many places, is curious, but one point in his work is especially worth noticing. In the scarp he has found several water channels, some small excavated caves with steps across them, and some cisterns constructed against the face of the rock, which undoubtedly formed part of a system of baths. In confirmation of this idea it is curious to find that this point is called by the natives Hammam Tabaríyeh (or Hammam Daoud)—the Baths of Tiberius (or David), the latter name is probably due to the neighbourhood of the so-called Tomb of David. The former name is given by Dr. Schultz in his map, *ed.* 1845.

ON THE SITE OF NOB AND THE HIGH PLACES.

By Lieutenant Conder, R.E.

The wanderings of the ark, and the positions of the great religious centres in Palestine previous to the final settlement at Jerusalem, are questions not so easily understood from the Bible accounts as might at first be supposed, and the identification of one principal site connected with this question, namely, the city of the priests, to which David fled from Saul, has remained hitherto a moot point.

After the conquest of the hill country by Joshua, the ark and the tabernacle were removed to Shiloh, where they remained until the disastrous days of the high-priesthood of Eli. It was thence that the defeated Israelites brought the great palladium of their nation to the camp at Eben Ezer. It is not stated whether or not the ark was unprotected by any proper covering or tent, but the general impression produced by the description is, that the tabernacle remained stationary, and the ark only was moved. On the defeat of Israel it was carried to Ashdod (Esdúd), where it was lodged in the house of Dagon, another indication that the ark alone was taken. On the destruction of Dagon's statue, it was sent to Gath (a site yet to be identified), and thence to Ekron ('Akír), in the valley of Soreg (Wady Serár). From Ekron the kine brought it in the cart to Beth Shemesh ('Ain Shemis), and hence the men of Kirjath Jearim (Kariet el 'Anab) fetched it up to their own village, where it rested until the time of David. When finally it was decided to bring the ark to Jerusalem, we find that David went down (2 Sam. vi.) to Baalath of Judah and fetched it from Gibeah. It was then left after the death of the unhappy Uzzah in the house of Obed Edom the Gittite, and from thence finally taken to Jerusalem, where it dwelt "within

curtains" until the consecration of Solomon's temple. Baalath was, as we learn from another passage (Joshua xv.), the same place as Kirjath Jearim, but of the site of the house of Obed Edom we have no indication. The word Gibeah is the "hill" of 1 Sam. vii. 1, the higher part of the village of Kirjath Jearim.

It appears, therefore, that from the time of Eli to that of David the ark was wandering, and separated from the great religious centre of the country. It seems also, from the various accounts of its transport on carts from place to place—no mention being made of the transfer of the sanctuary with it, whilst its temporary lodging was a house or a heathen temple—that the ark was, during that period, separated from the tabernacle, for the history of which we are obliged to seek other indications in the books of Samuel. A passage in the second book of Chronicles is conclusive on this point. Solomon, we learn, went to the "great high place of Gibeon" (1 Kings iii. 4), "for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord made in the wilderness." "*But* the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath Jearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem" (2 Chron. i. 4).

The indications of places in which the tabernacle was pitched are not numerous. We find Israel gathering to Samuel in Mizpeh, where he sacrificed to God (1 Sam. vii. 9). A high place near the boundary of Benjamin is mentioned soon after as one where Samuel was accustomed to sacrifice, and which seems probably to be the same Mizpeh again mentioned as the rendezvous of the nation demanding a king (1 Sam. x. 17). Mizpeh and Bethel were sacred places before Eli's time, but the pouring out of water "before the Lord," together with its being a place of general assembly for all Israel, seems to place it above the rank of the secondary places of worship at one time considered lawful.

The places chosen as sacred, and for judgment of the people by Samuel, were Gilgal (near Jericho), Bethel (Beitin), and Mizpeh, his home being at Ramah (Er Ram). Mizpeh is mentioned in Joshua (xviii. 26), in connection with Gibeon (El Jib), Ramah (Er Ram), Beeroth (Bireh), Chephivah (Kefireh), all in the hill country of Benjamin). In Nehemiah (iii. 7) it appears with Gibeon, and in Jeremiah it is mentioned in connection with the same town as the stronghold of the Jews.

Vague as these intimations are, it seems more than probable that Mizpeh was at one time the religious capital, that it was near Gibeon, and that probably the tabernacle was there erected on its removal from Shiloh. When, however, we advance to rather a late period, we find that the site of the tabernacle is at Nob. Thus, David fleeing from Saul at Ramah (Er Ram), after his interview with Jonathan and on his way to Gath, comes to Nob, where Ahimelech the priest gives him the shewbread, and inquires for him of God; the ephod also is mentioned, and it seems from the passage clear that the tabernacle was at that time

placed at Nob (1 Sam. xxii.) Of the position of this important place we have but little indication, and it has consequently been placed in a variety of sites. In the book of Joshua it does not appear at all, or at all events not under that name. We find it, however, once more in the great descriptive chapter in Isaiah, where its position is indicated with some exactitude. The host has come to Aiath (El Tell), passed to Migron, laid up its carriages at Michmash (Mukhmas), gone over the passage (Wady Suweinit), and lodged at Geba (Jeba). "As yet," says the prophet, "shall he remain at Nob that day: he shall shake his hand against . . . . the hill of Jerusalem" (Isaiah x. 32). It seems, therefore, that Nob was a place of some military importance, as are the others previously mentioned—that it was within sight of Jerusalem, and in the neighbourhood of the Benjamite cities.

It is at once evident that there is a strong parallelism between the two sites of Nob and Mizpeh, and it is remarkably suggestive that, as shown, the two names never occur in one passage. Mizpeh was a high place, at which apparently the tabernacle was for some time erected, a place of military strength and importance, and situate in the hill country of Benjamin, near Gibeon and Rameh. Nob in like manner was the site of the erection of the tabernacle, a place of military importance, and situate in the hill country of Benjamin, near Rameh and Gebim, which is in all probability Gibeon. When, in addition to this parallelism between the Mizpeh of Samuel and the Nob of David, we find the meaning of the name to be nearly the same—Mizpeh being a watch-tower, and Nob a high place—the conclusion seems almost irresistible that the two are but varieties of one name, that of the "great high place."

Bold as it may appear, there is yet room for still further identifying these two sites with the high place of Gibeon mentioned in the time of Solomon. It has been already seen that the tabernacle was for some time at least placed at Gibeon, whilst the ark was in Jerusalem, and unless there be good evidence in favour, it should hardly be assumed that the centre of worship underwent continual and unnecessary change: nor is there anything strained or unnatural in the supposition of their identity, since, as already noted, both Nob and Mizpeh are mentioned in various passages in connection with this important royal town.

The full confirmation of the theory depends, however—(1st) on the further information contained in the Talmud; and (2nd) on certain topographical and philological indications existing at the present time.

The account given in the Mishna with reference to the tabernacle is so interesting that it may well be given here in full. It is to be found in the 14th of Zebahim, and may be translated as follows:—

§ 4. "Before the tabernacle was erected high places were lawful . . . . . after the tabernacle was erected high places were not lawful."

§ 5. "When they came to Gilgal, and the high places were lawful,

the most holy things were eaten within the enclosure, the less holy anywhere."

Maimonides comments on this, quoting Levit. xvii. 3, and explains that there was no permanent structure at Gilgal, but merely the original tabernacle.

§ 6. "When they came to Shiloh, the high places began to be unlawful; but there was no roof there, but a lower structure of stone and an upper tent. And it was a place of rest. Then the most holy things were eaten only within the enclosure, but the less holy and the second tithes wherever the house was visible."

Maimonides says this building was called either "the house" or "the tabernacle;" quoting 1 Sam. i. 24, "the house of the Lord in Shiloh," and Psalm lxxviii. 60, "the tabernacle of Shiloh." As the structure was semi-permanent, he explains, high places were unlawful.

§ 7. "When they came to Nob and Gibeon, the high places were allowed, but they used to eat the most holy things within the enclosure, and the less holy in all the cities of Israel."

Maimonides explains as follows:—

"After the sanctuary erected in Shiloh was destroyed for our sins, they erected the tabernacle which used to be in the desert in Nob, and transferred it to Gibeon, and it was in Nob and Gibeon fifty-seven years. Meantime it was lawful to sacrifice in the high places, for Shiloh was the place of rest and Jerusalem the heritage (as mentioned Deut. xii. 9, "the rest and the inheritance"). He then explains that during the time of rest the high places were temporarily disallowed, but on the establishment of the inheritance they became unlawful for ever, as is also stated in the next verse of the Mishna.

§ 8. "When they came to Jerusalem the high places were prohibited, nor were they ever again lawful. For this was the heritage . . . "

Maimonides and Bartenora both explain precisely that the Divine Majesty abode in Shiloh 369 years; that in Saul's time the site was changed to Nob, and taking Nob and Gibeon together, it remained there fifty-seven years, or until the time of the building of Solomon's temple.

This interesting and exact account fully bears out, as will be seen, the conclusions already deduced from the Bible records. The first period at Gilgal was but a temporary pitching of the tabernacle of the wilderness. The establishment at Shiloh for more than three and a half centuries was a structure of a more permanent character, intended to last only until Jerusalem came into the hands of the Jews by the defeat of the Jebusites, after which the first natural thought of David was to establish permanently the sacred service in the holy city of inheritance. But with the disastrous times of Eli came the great shock of separation between the ark and the tabernacle. The established place of sacrifice at Nob, where the mercy-seat was never present, and where only the desert tabernacle was erected, was felt to be but a temporary arrangement, and the same laws which held good for the wanderers of the

wilderness were resumed. Finally, it must be remarked that the natural interpretation of the account is that Nob and Gibeon were close together, or the removal from one place to another would have constituted a period as distinct as the others mentioned by the Mishna. The word Mizpeh is not used in this passage of the Talmud, and we are therefore led to the conclusion that if Mizpeh were the site of the erection of the tabernacle it must be identical with Nob or Gibeon.

Enough, then, is found to lead to the conclusion that only four sites have to be considered as being at various times the religious centres—Gilgal, Shiloh, the high place (or Nob) of Gibeon, and Jerusalem itself. At the first we should not now expect to find any traces of the site of the tabernacle, though the sand mounds at Birket Jiljulieh, which I mentioned in the report on the establishment of the probable site of Gilgal, may by some be supposed to have some connection with this account. At Shiloh, however, we naturally expect to see traces of the more permanent structure erected, and there can be little doubt that they exist, as already pointed out by Major Wilson, who says,—

"Northward the Tell (at Seilún or Shiloh) slopes down to a broad shoulder, across which a sort of level court, 77 feet wide and 412 long, has been cut. The rock is in places scarped to a height of 5 feet . . . there is no other level space on the Tell sufficiently large to receive a tent of the dimensions of the tabernacle."—*Quarterly Statement*, Jan., 1873, p. 38.

The tradition of the tabernacle is no doubt recognisable in the unusual title of the principal mosque at Seilún, Jami'a ed Daim (mosque of the Eternal).

The interest attaching to the third site is equal to either of the former.

Dean Stanley has shown that the site of the high place of Gibeon is indisputable, but the position of Nob is not settled in the same satisfactory manner. The simple examination of the original Hebrew leads, however, to an irresistible conclusion, and allows us to reconcile his identification with that commonly given for Mizpeh, and also to fix that of Nob. The Hebrew word Nob, or Neb, contains no vowel, and there is therefore no philological difficulty in connecting it with the Arabic Nebi. We have here the common process of change of meaning which has preserved so many Hebrew names with scarce an alteration beyond that necessary to give them an intelligible meaning in Arabic. As instances, Timnath converted into Tibneh, "strawy;" Sycaminum into Tell el Semak (mound of the fish); and a host of similar cases may be mentioned. Neb having no meaning of "high" in Arabic, is converted into Neby, "a prophet;" and as tradition naturally grows more detailed, so the name of a particular prophet of one who was most intimately connected with the place in question is added, and the Hebrew Nob reappears in the modern unusual title of Nebi Samwil.

The site in question fulfils in a remarkable manner the requisites already explained. As in the case of the Altar of Ed, we here again deal with one of the most remarkable sites in the country. Nebi Samwil is

so close to Gibeon that there can be no doubt as to its being the high place visited by Solomon. It is within sight of Jerusalem, and not far from Michmash and Geba, whilst as a military point it is of the greatest importance. Thus the description of Isaiah applies exactly, and it is, moreover, directly on the way of David's journey from Ramah to Gath. Thus, as Dean Stanley remarks, by its close connection with the most interesting period of Jewish history, "a significance is given to what would otherwise have been a blank and nameless feature in a region where all the less conspicuous hills are distinguished by some historical name."

As generally happens in Palestine, the site still retains its original character. A great high place in Jewish time, it was the site of a beautiful church built by the Crusaders, and this in turn has become a mosque whose minaret is visible from great distances in every direction. The view from Nebi Samwil is splendid, and its steep sides form a picturesque detail, contrasting with the rounder outlines of the Judæan and Benjamite summits.

In a report written during last winter (*Quarterly Statement*, April, 1874), I noticed the curious rock-cut approach to the great church, which we were at the time inclined to attribute to Crusading date; it does not, however, show any very distinctive marks of date, and may very well be older. It is true that no permanent structure was erected at Nob, but a flat court of some kind would be necessary for the outer enclosure; and when we reflect on the discovery by Major Wilson of a similar courtyard at Shiloh, it seems very probable that this cutting was originally intended for the accommodation of the tabernacle. A very curious narrow passage conducts to it; outside are pools carefully hewn; and a great birket, with an aqueduct channel and a number of rock-cut chambers, are found lower down the hill. The plan of the top of the hill we have taken very carefully, though not at the time aware of its probable importance, and thus all the traces indicative of the tabernacle have been properly noted and preserved.

The outcome of the preceding pages amounts, therefore, to this—that at Nebi Samwil we find Nob the high place of Gibeon, and probably, though it is not possible to assert this definitely, the Mizpeh of Samuel, and that traces of the exterior court of the tabernacle in this great high place are yet discoverable on the summit of the hill.

Before leaving this interesting subject, a few words may in conclusion be said as to the high places mentioned in the passage quoted from the Talmud, and of which traces are yet visible in Palestine.

The land, on the invasion by the children of Israel, was full of sites of pagan worship, and we find a special command given (Deut. xii. 2) to destroy all the places of the false gods "upon the high mountains and upon the hills and under every green tree." This tradition of worship was, however, never completely eradicated, and to the present day it is a remarkable feature in Palestine that almost every important hill-top is the seat of a white mazar or tomb-house, a sacred place of prayer,

generally shaded by a great tree, and often no doubt preserving the site of a pagan altar. Every green tree in similar manner is in the more barren part of the hill country held sacred; rags and threads hang from its branches as votive offerings, and the name of a saint or prophet is often connected with the spot.

There are, however, allusions in the Bible to "high places" which do not seem directly connected with idolatrous worship. Thus, in the time of Solomon's accession, "the people sacrificed in high places because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord until those days." Asa, again, though irreproachable in his religious conduct, did not remove the high places, and in the time of Jehoshaphat "the people offered and burnt incense in the high place" (1 Kings xv. 14, and xxii. 43). Still later we find the Cutheans mentioned as fearing the Lord and making priests of the high places.

The Talmudical comments explain how it came to be merely a venial offence that these high places were not removed. Until the building of the temple they had been at alternate periods lawful places of worship and unlawful. On the establishment of the kingdom at Jerusalem they became for ever unlawful, and the danger of their leading to a local perversion of the purity of the religion rendered their destruction of the greatest importance. Their use had, however, become a habit of the people, and was not so easily abolished as would have been the case had Jerusalem fallen in the first attack on the country. The foreseen consequence came quickly, and the worship of golden calves symbolical of Jehovah in the high places made by Jeroboam (1 Kings xii. 32) led soon to the adoption of the original idolatry of the indigenous population with all its paraphernalia of groves, teraphs, images, and pillars.

The site chosen by Jeroboam gives a most remarkable confirmation of this view, for one of the calves was erected in Bethel, a place specially sacred to the true God since the time of Jacob, and one of the three visited yearly by Samuel at a period of the history when, as shown by the Talmud, high places were still lawful.

During our Survey we have met with two sites which seem undoubtedly to bear traces of this worship in high places, but which have been scarce mentioned in our former reports.

The first is situate at Jebel Bir Asúr, on the range north of Samaria; here on the highest point of the shed is a great square structure, some ten feet high, of roughly-hewn blocks. It is evidently of great antiquity, and the size of the stones precludes the possibility of its being erected by the shepherds. It served us instead of a rijm for a trigonometrical point, and we whitewashed it most irreverently. A well exists near, and on the same ridge are no less than three saint-houses all overshadowed with large trees.

The second site of the kind is mentioned in a report of Mr. Drake's. I made a plan of it and careful notes. It is close to the small temple of Abu 'Amr, west of the Plain of Esdraelon. The soil is soft and

marly, and a deep pit has been roughly hewn and still holds water—a narrow flight of steps leads down to it. Immediately above is a solid mass of masonry, the stones of great size and roughly hewn; two or three fine oaks overshadow it; it measures 35ft. by 30ft., and is some 6ft. to 8ft. high. Close by is the tomb-house of Sheikh Selámeh, and a little farther on the same hill is the Roman temple. There is no reason to doubt that we here find an instance of the altars erected "under every green tree."

In concluding this paper I would remark that there are two methods of studying the subject of identification. The one natural in England is the literary comparison of various passages leading to conclusions which it is sought to verify by aid of the map. In Palestine the process is naturally reversed. The prominent points in the landscape arrest the eye, and the interest of connecting them with Scripture history is far greater than that of the study of obscure Hebrew names. The prosecution of this method must naturally lead to discoveries of the greatest interest, and among these may be mentioned those made lately during the prosecution of the Survey, of which a list is given below.

1. Kh. Semmakah (Ecbatana, a Roman town on Carmel).
2. Kh. Deir Serúr (Sozuza, an early Christian episcopal town).
3. Keráwa (Archelais, a site not as yet described).
4. Tell el Semak (Sycaminum—according to Mr. Drake).
5. Eshu'a (Eshtaol—with the probable tomb of Samson).
6. Jiljúlieh (Gilgal—a confirmation of former discovery).
7. Wady Suweinit (the Senneh of Jonathan, with the site of Philistine camp).
8. 'Ain Zahrah (Zererath or Zerthan, mentioned in Gideon's history).
9. Tubás (probably the Tabbath of the same passage).
10. 'Ash el Ghorâb (Rock Oreb of the same account).
11. Tuweil el Dhiab (winepress of Zeeb in the same connection).
12. Kurn Surtabeh (the altar of Ed, Josh. 22).
13. Beit 'Atab (Rock Etam of Samson, as suggested by Sergeant Black).
14. Nebi Samwil (the high place of Gibeon and city of Nob).

CLAUDE R. CONDER, Lieutenant R.E.

THE SCENERY OF DAVID'S OUTLAW LIFE.

BY LIEUTENANT CONDER, R.E.

THE extension of the Survey in the hill country of Judah has now enabled us to explain the wanderings of David in his outlaw life, during the latter period of the reign of Saul; a story which, in its romantic incidents, yields in interest to none of the many adventurous histories of the Old Testament. Four new identifications may now be published with a great degree of confidence, and the thorough examination of

the country forming the theatre of these episodes enables us to give force, by the comparison of its existing character with that required by the narrative, to the faithful indications of the ancient accounts.

David's first flight was from the royal capital of Gibeah of Benjamin, probably the present Jeb'a, which stands on a plateau on the south brink of the great Michmash Valley, in the centre of the lot of Benjamin. His first resting-place on his way to the Philistine plain was at Nob, then the resting-place of the Tabernacle and the chief religious centre. For this site, hitherto unfixed, I have already proposed the modern Nebi Samwîl, which fits well with the requisites of the present narrative. Leaving immediately the fated spot, soon desecrated by the daring murder of the entire priestly family, David descended into the borders of the Shephalah, then in the hands of the Philistines, and took refuge with Achish, King of Gath, a Philistine capital not as yet fully identified, but which seems most probably identical with the great White Mound of Tell el Safi, on the borders of the Maritime Plain, commanding one of the main adits to the hill country, the Valley of Elah, already so famous in David's history as the scene of the death of Goliath of Gath. A confirmation of this identification (first proposed, I believe, by Dr. Porter), from a passage in Josephus, where Gath appears under another name, I propose to put forward later on. In the meantime it is sufficient to say that the distance at which David now considered himself safe from the pursuit of Saul was less than thirty English miles.

Indeed, in the whole account, nothing is more striking than the small extent of the country traversed, and its short distance from the royal capital. David appears to have wandered in an area the radius of which did not exceed twenty miles from his native town of Bethlehem. Generally speaking, he interposed this city between himself and Saul, and as we know that he was able to communicate with relations there (1 Sam. xx. 1), it seems probable that he thus ensured an early notice of any attempt on the king's part to surprise him when betrayed by the men of the various localities in which he sought refuge.

Recognised at Gath, David again fled and entered the possessions of Judah, hiding in the far-famed Cave of Adullam. This site is as yet outside the bounds of the Survey, but has been identified by M. Ganneau with a great degree of certainty. There was a city of the name, and an important place, enumerated among the royal Canaanite capitals. The cities which occur in connection with it—Maresha (El Marash), Jarmuth (Yarmuk), Socoh (Shuweikeh)—all lie in a short distance of one another in the low hills south of the Valley of Elah (Wady el Sumt) close to the scene of the famous duel. It is here that M. Ganneau finds the name of 'Aid el Mia, which represents very well the Hebrew 'Adlem, an identification which we hope afterwards to confirm. The site is a hill-side near Socoh (Shuweikeh), which is burrowed with caves, part natural, partly enlarged by human agency.

Hareth.—From Adullam, David next went over to Moab, to seek an asylum for his father and mother in the country of his ancestress Ruth.

It appears that he then lived for a time in the desert, for the parallel passage in Josephus represents the prophet Gad as recommending him to leave "the desert," and go into "the portion of Judah" (Ant. VI., xii. 4). The Authorised Version gives "the hold," a title which it applies to more than one of David's places of refuge. The place to which he next departed is called in the English the "Forest of Hareth," and many theories on the ancient fertility of Palestine are founded on the existence of this forest, and of the "Wood of Ziph." It may, however, appear in this paper that both these readings are mistaken, and we may, in fact, succeed in cutting down both the forests at a single blow.

The word used in the Hebrew is (חרש), *Y'ar*, which means properly a grove; but a remarkable difference exists in the Septuagint. The Vatican and Alexandrine manuscripts both read εν πολει, in the city, a difference which is due to the transposition of *Yeh* and *'Ain*, reading *'Ayr* for *Y'ar*. The parallel passage of Josephus also reads the "city" of Hareth.

The improbability of any forest or collection of timber trees having existed in this part of Palestine cannot be too strongly insisted on. That extensive woods have been cut down, that a forest once covered half the Plain of Sharon, that wild thickets abounded as they still do on the slopes of Carmel, is certain; but it is contrary to the character of Judæan scenery to suppose in times as late as that of David, when the water supply and seasons were almost the same that they now are, and just before the time when Solomon was forced to bring all his building timber from Lebanon, that any forest properly so called should have existed.

We are bound, it seems to me, to take the concurrence of the two ancient manuscripts with the authority of Josephus, when thus taking the side of probability, rather than the translation of the Authorised Version, depending upon a transposition of the letters, which might so easily have occurred.

The second part of the question is to discover the position of the town of Hareth, thus transformed into an imaginary forest. It is not mentioned in any other passage, and we have only two indications of its position, and these but slight. In the first place, it was in the lot of Judah, and from the general indications above noticed, we should be inclined to place it south of Bethlehem, though the Onomasticon puts it west of Jerusalem, probably close to the boundary of the tribe. The second indication is more precise. From thence David went to the aid of the men of Keilah attacked by the Philistines. There was no special reason for his succouring this town except one. Keilah (now Kilah) is a well known place at the foot of the higher hills, south-east of Adullam, and some six miles from it. It is not, therefore, in the region of David's native place, and its inhabitants were in no way specially attached to him, for we find that, with the ingratitude so characteristic of the ordinary oriental, they were ready to deliver up their deliverer to Saul, immediately after he had saved their threshing-floors from the Philistine

nomadic hordes. The simple reason must, therefore, have been that David and his men were at the time in the immediate neighbourhood of the village, and that his own safety was to a certain extent endangered by this unusually far-pushed Philistine ghazoo.

We may, therefore, look for Hareth, or, as the Hebrew is properly transliterated, *Kharîth*, in the neighbourhood of the modern village of Kilah, and here, up higher in the hills, on the north side of Wady Arneba, one of the heads of the Valley of Elah, now stands the small modern village of Kharás, a name embodying all the essential letters of Harith, though with a slightly different termination. The site is an ancient one, with the usual indications—ancient wells, cisterns, and rough caves in the hill side. Its position in the same district formerly serving as a refuge to David is interesting, and it may, I believe, be accepted as the site of the City of Hareth.

The confinement in a city "that hath gates and bars" was not consistent with David's predatory and fugitive life. From Keilah he escapes yet further south, a distance of fifteen miles, and "abode in the wilderness in strongholds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph; and Saul sought him every day."

We now come to one of the most beautiful episodes of the history. The unselfish love of Jonathan (perhaps the finest of the Old Testament characters) prompted him to seek the oppressed and fugitive bandit, and renew his pledges of friendship. Jonathan goes to seek David, who was "in the wilderness of Ziph *in a wood*," and went to David "into the wood and strengthened his hand in God" (1 Sam. xxiii. 16).

Wood of Ziph.—We are, therefore, here called upon to identify or to destroy a second forest, and this with even greater certainty than that of Hareth. The position of the northern Ziph, at Tell Zîf, has long been known. It is a conspicuous mound, lying south-east of Hebron, and although it shows at the present day no trace of buildings, we found a quarry on the northern side, and some large Jewish tombs; one, having a portico with rude rock pilasters, is to be found lower down on the south. It is, however, usual to say, "that the wood of Ziph has disappeared," which we may further supplement by asserting that in all probability it never had any real existence.

The Septuagint versions seem here to give the local colouring with unusual fidelity; the "wilderness of Ziph" they translate by the word (ἀυχμός), meaning dried up or parched, and the wood appears as γη καινη in the Vatican, and ἡ καινη in the Alexandrine—"the new ground," or the "new place" of Ziph. It is very striking to find, on turning to Josephus, whose works date earlier than either manuscript, that the interview is said to take place "in a certain place called the New Place belonging to Ziph" (Ant. VI. xiii. 2). The explanation is, however, very simple, and the verdict must once more, I think, be given against the English reading. The Hebrew term here used is Choresh, and the difference between it and the word translated by the Septuagint, "the New Place," is not one of letters, *but merely of points.*

This is by no means a solitary instance. Many others could be cited in the topographical passages of the Bible in which the points cause a considerable difference. It is evident that the modern points cannot have been the same as those used (if any) at the time of the Septuagint translation, and in a question turning upon points alone, the decision must be made on independent grounds.

The existence at any time of a wood in this part of the country is geologically almost an impossibility. From Hebron to Beersheba not a single spring of any importance exists in the eastern hills in which the story now lies. The soil is a soft, chalky limestone, so porous that every drop of water sinks through the strata to the hard dolomite beneath. The rounded hills, which invariably mark this formation, are not only entirely without culture, but show no signs of any different condition at a former period, except in the immediate neighbourhood of some of the large sites, where the vine seems to have been cultivated. The country is emphatically a dry land, looking down on the barren wastes which lie above the Dead Sea between Masada and Engedi. There is no moisture capable of supporting vegetable growth. The cistus and the belan bushes grow among the ledges, but not a single tree exists in the whole country.

The character of the district leads us therefore to adopt the Septuagint reading and that of Josephus, but yet further we have recovered amongst the two hundred names in the country round Yutta, that of *Khirbet Khoreisa*, which is applied to an ancient site about one mile south of Tell Zif. I have occasion to speak more fully of this site in another report, as we found in it a Greek Christian inscription of some interest, but it is sufficient here to say that its bell-mouthed cisterns and extensive caves burrowing the hill side, prove it to be an ancient locality, and we can have little hesitation in identifying it with the Choresh of Zif, a village or hamlet belonging to the larger town at Tell Zif.

The Rock of Maon.—The inhabitants of the district seem to have been no better than their descendants, and their betrayal of David forced him to descend still further south. In the wilderness of Maon he abode, according to Josephus, "in a great rock." The passage in Samuel has the curious expression that he "went down unto a rock." Maon is no doubt the present Tell Ma'in, the most prominent object in the landscape, a huge knoll, some 100 feet high. It is, however, on the same level as Tell Zif, and I would suggest that the passage refers to *Wady el Wa'r*, "the valley of Rocks"—a place so rugged as to be particularised by a name which might be considered in some degree applicable to many of the neighbouring valleys. The wady has its head close to Tell Ma'in, and the long ridges running east to the Dead Sea form a fitting site for that narrow escape, when, separated but by a single crest, David was only saved from discovery by the dramatic incident of a sudden Philistine invasion.

The scene now changes to the vicinity of Engedi, where David next retired. It may be remarked that thus descending gradually to the

lower level, and again returning at a later period to the neighbourhood of Ziph, David follows the custom of the modern Bedawi, whose tents in winter are on the sheltered plains by the Dead Sea shore, but in summer on the hills at the verge of the cultivated districts. It is very probable that in this we have an indication of the season, and that it was only the unbearable heat of summer that forced the band from their secure fastnesses, "the rocks of the wild goats," or ibex, still found in Wady Umm el Beden, to the hills of Ziph, where they had already so little cause to expect a safe retreat. Saul again pursues David, and the magnanimous treatment which the king receives at his hands brings about a temporary reconciliation. The scene is a cave which Josephus mentions as being deep and hollow, and also near Engedi. That it was on the roadside from Gibeah we learn from the Authorised Version. Caves are not very numerous in that district, and we may succeed, when surveying that part of the country, in determining by these indications the exact cavern in question. Meanwhile it may be remarked in illustration of the passage, that nothing is more usual in Palestine than the herding of sheep, goats, and cows in the innumerable caverns which are found everywhere. The cave in question must have been of considerable extent to have given shelter to David "and his men." His band numbered about 600 at this time, although it does not follow that they were all in the cave.

The next episode is that of Nabal of Carmel. Of this there is little to write. The fact of his possessions being in Carmel, whilst he himself, a Ziphite, lived in Maon, is easily understood, for the distance from Maon to Carmel is only about two miles. It is possible that the latter place was chosen for the sheep-shearing, in consequence of the fine reservoir lying in a hollow beneath the great Crusading castle. Even in autumn it was full of water, and surrounded by herds of the Arab camels. The country in this part preserves its original character; a little corn and maize is grown in the valleys, and at the ruins are traces of wine-presses, showing the former cultivation of the grape, but the greater part is pasture land, rough rocks with the dry vegetation on which goats and even sheep seem to thrive. The village of Yutta is said to boast 17,000 sheep alone, the sheikh himself owning 250, besides goats, cows, camels, asses, and good horses.

The possessions of Nabal would therefore entitle him to be considered one who "liveth in prosperity" at the present day, as he owned 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats—the latter being still the less numerous here, whereas in other districts they outnumber the sheep by perhaps ten to one.

In connection with the character of the country, it is also interesting to note the present brought by Abigail—200 loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep, five measures of parched corn, 100 clusters of raisins (now extensively manufactured around Hebron), and 200 cakes of figs. These products show the cultivation to have materially decreased, though the pastures remain probably unchanged.

The Hill of Hachilah.—We now come to the last meeting which took place between Saul and David, the last reconciliation which was soon followed by the disastrous defeat on Gilboa, and the termination of David's nomadic life. From the wilderness of Paran he comes up again to the territory of the treacherous Ziphites, who bear news to Saul in Gibeah—"Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before the Jeshimon." From another passage we learn that it was "on the right hand" of the Jeshimon, and from Josephus it appears that Saul, coming down to Ziph, was overtaken by nightfall in the hill over which or by which the road ran, and so encamped; "and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him," 1 Sam. xxvi. 5. From the bolster at his head David took the king's spear and the cruse of water, which is never found far from a sleeping Syrian; resisting the temptations of his nephew, marked with the same cruelty which the other brother, Joab, showed afterwards to Abner, David ascended a hill top, far off yet within call, and there upbraided the sleeping guard, "for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen upon them."

The topographical indications in this passage are so definite, and the scenery of the country so marked, that there can be but little question as to the locality of this closing scene. From Hebron southwards to Maon the country presents one uniform surface, rising eastwards to a long cliff over the lower plateau of Engedi. Ploughed as it is by shallow valleys, it yet presents no stronghold or remarkably high hill, but, as viewed from the summit of Tell Ma'in, a succession of long-succeeding rounded ridges. The site must have been north or north-east of Ziph, where the hills rise to a greater elevation, and where deep wadies start suddenly and fall steeply down towards the desert. Such a position agrees also, as shown above, with the requisite position of Saul's camp. The hill must, moreover, face the Jeshimon on the right hand, that is to say, in speaking from Gibeah on the west. A site fulfilling these requisites has necessarily a very limited choice of positions.

The Jeshimon (for the article is invariably used) was, as the word signifies, a desert or solitude. Peor and Pisgah are mentioned in another passage (Num. xxi. 20) as facing the Jeshimon, and we cannot hesitate to identify it with the plateau or Bukera above the Dead Sea on its western side.

The probable site of Hachilah is the high hill bounded by deep valleys north and south on which the ruin of *Yekin* now stands. Vandervelde, with some hesitation, suggests this as the town of Cain, but apparently is unaware of the proper form of that name, which is written Hakin in the Hebrew, thus considerably closer to the present form than he appears to have supposed. Between Hakin and Hakila there is a very strong affinity, and it is unnecessary to state that the n and the l are frequently interchanged, as for instance in the words Sinasil or Silasil which in modern Arabic both mean an earthquake.

The name therefore exists almost unchanged, and the indications on the

spot are strong. A good road following the Judæan watershed and leading south to Ziph exists on the side of the hill. A large ancient ruin with caves and cisterns stands on the brink of the steep slope, and looks down upon the white marl ridges of the Jeshimon, barren and rugged, patched with buff and brown, dotted with low black tents, but destitute of any single shrub or tree. On the north the twin peaks of Jebel el Shukuf above Ain Jidy, and beyond, all separated by the gleaming thread of sea, scarce seen in its great chasm; below are the long ridges of Moab, the iron precipices, the thousand watercourses, the great plateau of Kerak, the black volcanic gorge of Callirhoe, all lying in deep shadows under the morning sun, or brightened with a crimson flush at sunset. The scene is as wild and striking as could be desired for the drama there enacted.

Yet further the meaning of the "trench" may perhaps be explained. On the south side the road passes by a flat plot of ground, lying low and having steep cliffs on either side; it forms the head of a large wady, and has two wells of living water close to the roadside. It was no doubt here, sheltered from view and near to water, according to the modern Arab fashion of hiding an encampment, that Saul would pitch his tents. High up on either of the hill tops David stood to call to the host, and no doubt the special expression that he passed over to the other side intimates his crossing the valley and ascending the opposite hill.

Here we may close the record; the town of Ziklag is not yet known to which David retired, and where he was at the time of the battle of Gilboa. Its position, north of the Brook of Besor, in the territory of Gath, three days' hard journey from Jezreel, will, however, I hope, enable us to fix it next spring, when surveying the southern Maritime Plain.

The extremely definite character of the topographical notices was insisted upon by Mr. Grove in the "Bible Dictionary," and first drew my attention to the subject. "It is very much to be desired," he says (See Maon, "Bible Dictionary"), that some traveller should take the trouble to see how the actual locality of M'ain agrees with the minute indications of the narrative." I hope that the preceding pages, the result of careful comparison of the various passages, and a detailed inspection of the ground, may be considered satisfactory in settling the disputed points and in giving clearness and consistency to the history of the nomadic life of David and his men.

THE ROYAL CANAANITE AND LEVITICAL CITY OF DEBIR.

By Lieutenant Conder, R.E.

El Dhoheriyeh, *November* 7, 1874.

The systematic arrangement of the topographical lists of the Book of Joshua is a subject which has as yet been little studied, and very

often it is altogether denied. The present survey, by placing known sites in their proper relative positions, by confirming identifications already proposed, and yet more by the addition of a larger number of new identifications than have been made since the time of Robinson, will be most invaluable in the elucidation of these difficult questions.

"So little," says Mr. Grove (article "Zior," "Bib. Dict."), "is known of the principle on which the groups of towns are collected in these lists, that it is impossible to speak positively" as to many probable identifications.

A careful inspection of the various groups in the lot of Judah has led me to a discovery which, as I have never met with it in any standard work, I am led to consider new. It is one of immense interest, as showing that the topographical system is far more perfect than would at first be imagined. It may be briefly stated thus:—

The list given in the twelfth chapter of Joshua, and preceding all other topographical lists, forms the key to the whole.

Nothing could be simpler than the system depending on this definition. The towns here referred to, thirty-one in number, were royal cities of the Canaanites. They reappear in the succeeding lists, and it will be found that, with one exception easily explained, every separate group of towns contains a royal city. The larger groups occurring in the plains and lowlands contain naturally more than one, but the country is at once divided by these royal cities into districts, which will, on inspection, be found to have natural boundaries, and to be to a certain extent preserved to the present day.

Without enlarging further on this subject, which I propose to follow out later on, it will become evident that of all sites in the country these royal cities are the most valuable as indicating the locality of other towns connected with them.

Of the thirty-one no fewer than twenty-six were known long ago. M. Ganneau added one to the list in the discovery of Gezer, and only four remain to be fixed, Debir in the south, and Lasharon in the north of Palestine, with Libnah and Makkedah in the Philistine plain.

The site to which our attention has been specially directed since leaving Jerusalem is that of Debir, which has never as yet been placed in a satisfactory manner. The name Dewír Ban, which some have supposed to be the modern representative of the site, exists within a couple of miles of Hebron, south, and not as placed on Murray's new map, north of the valley containing Ain Unkúr, which, under the incorrect form of Nunkúr, Dr. Rosen mentions as a probable site for the Upper and Lower Springs.

There is, however, a fatal objection to this identification. Dewir Ban is the name, not of an ancient site, but merely of a hill-top among the vineyards close to Hebron.

To say nothing of its being far out of the district where Debir should be sought, it is not natural to suppose that this capital city should have existed so close to Hebron, especially as it does not occur in the list of the Hebron group.

A second identification is proposed by Vandevelde at Khirbet Dilbeh; it is, however, very evident from his remarks that he never visited the spot. The city of Debir stood, as will be seen, in a *dry land*, and it is therefore directly contradictory to the plain statement in Joshua to place it at the only spot in the country where fine springs occur. In addition to which Khirbet Dilbeh, which lies close to the spring of that name, is an unimportant site, and not apparently of any great antiquity.

"The subject, and indeed the whole topography of this district, requires further consideration," is Mr. Grove's comment on the attempts as yet made to fix the position of Debir; and indeed there are few parts of Palestine so little known and so incorrectly mapped. It is evident that most of the sites have been fixed by inquiries made in passing along the main lines of communication, and it is often quite plain that where two ruins have been seen almost in line, the traveller pointed to the one generally the farthest, whilst the native gave the name of the nearer.

Indeed, the proper district of Debir has never been correctly understood, in consequence of a very fatal mistake made in the first instance by Dr. Robinson.

Fixing correctly the position of Socoh, or Shueikeh, he has placed Anab (the modern 'Anáb) immediately east of it. I was considerably surprised at not being able to find this important name in our list from Yutta camp, but our guides explained with one accord that this ruin was much farther west out of their country, and west of El Dhoheriyeh, and such proved to be the case, according to the testimony of the inhabitants of the latter place.

The site so named by Dr. Robinson is really called Deir el Shems, a name which has been placed farther north on the maps.

This error has been followed by other travellers, who have no doubt merely copied from Robinson's map. It is even to be found in Professor Palmer's route sketch, although he spent a night at El Dhoheriyeh; but there is not a shadow of doubt that the name was either wrongly given to or wrongly understood by Robinson, and that the true site of Anáb is a ruin containing remains of a church and a modern tower existing on a ridge immediately west of El Dhoheriyeh. This fatal error has caused the site to be sought in the wrong direction, and its correction leads naturally to the identification. The group of cities of which Debir was the capital was eleven in number, as follows:

1. Shamir			
2. Jattir	'Attir	Robinson.
3. Socoh	Shueikeh	Robinson.
4. Dannah	Domeh	C. R. Conder.
5. Kirjath Sepher Kirjath Sannah, or Debir ...	El Dhoheriyeh ...	C. R. Conder.
6. Anab	'Anáb	Robinson, C. R. C.
7. Eshtemoa	Semú'a	Robinson.

8. Anun	...	...	...	El Dilbeh	...	...	C. R. C.
9. Goshen	...	...	...	Lekiyeh	...	...	C. R. C.
10. Holon, or Hilen							
11. Giloh							

It will be seen that a sufficient number are known to allow of the district being pretty evident. It is an area of some hundred square mile of low hill country, including part of the great valley which, starting at Hebron, flows to Beersheba, and thence to the Mediterranean. 'Attir and Semú'a lie on the eastern limit, beyond the Wady Khalil. The northern boundary is given by Domeh, lying near the foot of a higher range which runs east and west, on which stands Dura. This higher district belongs to the Hebron capital. On the south the desert of Beersheba forms the natural boundary of the district, and on the west the hills sink suddenly into the Shephalah, in which stand the sites of Umm el Rumamin and Khuweilfeh, identified with towns belonging to Simeon and now inhabited only by Arab tribes. The district of Debir is indeed just the limit of the settled population and of cultivation; it is remarkable for its broad rolling downs, with a fruitful soil. The inhabitants of its two modern villages, El Dhoheriyeh and Semû'a, are very rich, especially in horses, flocks, herds, and cattle. It is pre-eminently a *dry land*, as not a single spring is to be found in it; but it is not less remarkable that in the very corner of the land the finest collection of springs in Southern Palestine is to be found, which, though not properly belonging to it, seem yet included in its territory. The explanation of this irregularity in the following of the natural boundaries is found very fully in the Book of Joshua.

We may now turn to the accounts of the capital contained in the Old Testament.

Debir, or Debr, for it occurs with and without the *yeh*, is first mentioned in the account of Joshua's Philistine campaign. From Eglon and Lachish the conqueror advanced up the main pass of Wady Duweimeh to the mountains of Hebron, and having seized this important town he attacked Debir. "And Joshua returned (or turned back), and all Israel with him, to Debir; and fought against it: and he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword . . . he left none remaining" (Josh. x. 38—40).

The expression here used is peculiar, and not found in any other verse. It shows that Debir was not in the direct line of his march, but required a special *détour*. This would place it south of Hebron most probably, for being the last of his conquests the next march would by rights have been northwards, from Hebron to Gilgal.

It does not, however, appear that Debir was deserted by its original inhabitants, for we find soon after that in the time of Caleb it stood another siege, when Othniel, his nephew, took it and received it as a dower with the hand of Achsah, his cousin.

This again points to its being near Hebron, the possession of Caleb.

There is a peculiar expression in the Book of Samuel where the Egyptian slave relates how the Amalekites had attacked the coast belonging to Judah and "the south of Caleb" 1 Sam. xxx. 14. It would appear therefore that the possession of Caleb extended to the South land, or Negeb. The most important passage, however, immediately follows this second conquest, and relates how Achsah begs of her father an additional "field," or territory.

The wording of the account is the same in the two records, Joshua xv. 19 and Judges i. 15. "Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs."

The following notes for the elucidation of the passage were kindly sent me by Dr. Chaplin, and are of great use in the correction of the rather obscure translation:—

(1) *A south land*, in the Hebrew Erets-han-negeb, *the south land*. (This, I may remark, is the χωρας of the Septuagint, which I have mentioned in the paper on the wood of Ziph.) *Negeb* is from a Semitic root, signifying *to be dry*. The Vulgate and French, Italian, and Spanish versions have "a dry land." Jewish commentators have the following:—"A portion of territory dry and without springs of water. Negeb signifies dry." The Targum of Jonathan Ben Uziel has *Darom*, a south a name, I may add, used in the "Onomasticon" to specify the territory of which we are now speaking). The southern part of Palestine seems to have been called Negeb, because it was dry.

To this note I may add that the expression Negeb would properly refer to all that district of hills of soft, porous, chalky limestone extending from the desert on the east (the Jeshimon) to 'Anab and the plain on the west, and from Dilbeh and Yutta on the north to Beersheba on the south.

The water supply in this district is derived from the rain alone, and not a single spring of any importance occurs.

(2). *Springs of water.*—In the Hebrew, *Gulloth mayim* (*Wells of water*). The Targum of Jonathan Ben Uziel has *Beth Shetaia d'Mayin chaiyin irrigatis expertum*—a well-watered place, as in Gen. xiii. 10. Rashi says *Gulloth mayim* is "*leth-hal-haal*," a piece of land that does not require irrigation. Other Jewish commentators say it was a land with fountains and springs of water.

(3). *Upper Springs and Lower Springs*—*Gulloth, Ilith* and *Gulloth, takhteth.*

(4). The Vulgate rendering of the passage is, "Quia terram arentem dedisti mihi da et irriguam aquis. Dedit ergo ei Caleb irriguam superiam et irriguam inferiam."

In this, as in many other cases, the Vulgate seizes the full force of the passage, which is obscured by the reading "south land," although, strictly speaking, the south land and dry land were synonymous terms. The passage may be better paraphrased thus, "Thou hast given me a

dry district; give me also a stream." Here, then, we may sum up all materials which come to hand for the identification of Debir.

1st. Debir is to be found in the south-west of Hebron, and between the towns of Socoh and 'Anáb, near Dannah, that being its position on the list.

2nd. It must itself be placed in a district destitute of springs, but at some little distance, on the borders of its territories, a well-watered district with springs at the head of and lower down in a valley must occur.

With regard to the name Debir, which is a form unlikely to endure in Arabic without change, it is said to signify *remote*, and occurs in one passage as Debir (1 Chron. vi. 5, 8), in another as Debr (Josh. x. 38), and in a third Deberah, or Debrah (Josh. xv. 49). Under this name it does not appear to have been known to Jerome. In the earlier passage (Josh. xv. 49) its original name is given as Kirjath Sannah, "the city of the Palm." In another it is said to have been first called Kirjath Sepher (Judges i. 11), "the city of books," a title which has given rise to many conjectures as to the civilisation of the Canaanites, some having looked upon Debir as a sort of collegiate town or Amalekite university.

The name, however, is not in this case so safe a guide as the two indications before noticed, to which must be added that so important a site must have left traces which are unmistakable. Rock excavation is the surest indication of antiquity in Palestine. The Troglodytes, who, as Josephus informs us, descended from Abraham and Keturah, must at one time have existed throughout the country, or imparted their habits to other tribes. The ancient Canaanites seem to have lived principally in caves, and no nation subsequently has done as much in the country in the excavation of caves, cisterns, and tombs out of the living rock as was done by the early Jews or their Canaanite predecessors.

But beyond these excavations evidence must also be derived from the roads. A capital such as Debir must have communicated with its dependent towns on every side, and these ancient roads, marked with rude boundary blocks of rock, are easily traceable in the south of Palestine.

There is, I think we may now say with certainty, only one site which fulfils all these requisites. The modern village of El Dhoheriyeh. This site has hitherto been much neglected. Professor Palmer slept there one night in 1870, and was the first to recognise its antiquity. Murray asserts that "there is nothing of interest to detain the pilgrim," but he finds it "a most interesting place. The dwellings consist principally of caves in the natural rock, some of them with rude arches carved over doorways, and all of them of the greatest antiquity. . . . The village is evidently an ancient site, and in the centre is a building of massive masonry containing three arched apartments."

Professor Palmer, misled by Robinson's mistake as to 'Anáb, does

not, however, propose any identification. With regard to the caves with arched entrances their antiquity is doubtful, for from their constant connection with Christian ruins, as well as from the fact that no arches occur in the really ancient ruins of the country, I have been led to consider them Christian. The central building, called El Hosn by the villagers, is also probably of the same date. That El Dhoheriyeh is a really ancient site is, however, indubitable.

Hewn cisterns with well-worn mouths and ancient rock-cut tombs are seen on every side, and it forms the central point whence many ancient roads diverge. To Attîr and Zanûta on the south-east, to Shuweikeh and Semû'a on the east, to 'Anâb and Ghuzzeh on the west, to Beersheba on the south, to Domeh, Dura, and Hebron on the north: to all of these good roads principally of antiquity lead. A careful examination of the country shows further that El Dhoheriyeh is the only ancient site in the neighbourhood which, as I have already shown, is very restricted by the terms of the various indications.

It is also very probable, though much stress cannot be laid on this point, that Dhoheriyeh is a corruption of the ancient name of Deberah, and the more so as the name has a distinct meaning in Arabic, being derived from Dhohr or Zohr, a back, and thus in the adjective form signifying the *village on the ridge*, for it stands, not as shown in previous maps half way up a slope, but on the very top of the long flat ridge which runs south from the higher hills of Dûra.

Debir was one of the Levitical cities, we therefore carefully searched for inscriptions or other marks.

I had occasion, in one of my last reports, to explain how we found the boundary of 3,000 cubits at Semû'a marked by a large stone with a name still forming the boundary of the lands belonging to the village. This discovery is all the more interesting if, as has been suggested, the 3,000 cubits marks the distance of a Sabbath day's journey.

In the case of El Dhoheriyeh Corporal Brophy discovered on the main road leading south, and exactly at the distance in question, taking the sixteen-inch cubit, a stone similar to the Hajr el Sakhain but larger: it had not, however, a name; there was also another stone of the same character (a large rough block similar to some of the English primeval monuments) to the west on the line, and at the south-east corner and close to the south-west corner were large wells.

On the north side Sergeant Black observed wells and wine-presses placed on the boundary line, if drawn with the sides not the diagonals of of the square facing the cardinal points, which still seems to me the more natural explanation of the Biblical account.

The second part of the question remains, however, still to be discussed. To place Debir at a spring is, as has been seen, evidently a mistake, but we are still bound to find in its neighbourhood *the Upper and Lower Springs* of the Book of Judges.

As has been shown, no ordinary spring will satisfy this account: a copious supply of water is to be inferred, and two springs or groups of

springs. The account is, however, fully satisfied by the Seil El Dilbeh, a secluded valley to the west of Yutta, and only six and a half miles north of El Dhoheriyeh.

On visiting this beautiful spot in the very end of October I found a considerable brook running in the midst and extending through the small gardens a distance of four or five miles. Such a supply of water is indeed a phenomenon in Palestine, and yet more extraordinary in the Negeb where no others occur. There are also, as required, both upper and lower springs, and these so copious that the various translations, pools of water, fountains for irrigation, or well watered places, are all fully accounted for.

There are in all fourteen springs divided into three groups.

The first includes 'Ain El Fureidis, 'Ain abu Kheit, and 'Ain Shkhakh abu Thor, and one other, situate near one another high up on the slopes of the hills south of Dúra.

From thence the Seil or brook runs east to the second group, including 'Ain el Májúr, 'Ain el Dilbeh, 'Ain el Hejeri, and three smaller springs situate in the bottom of the valley some 100 yards apart. The Seil then gradually turns south and passes the third group a little lower down, consisting of 'Ain el Fowár and three smaller. The total amounts, therefore, to fourteen. The site thus discovered exists, as would be expected, not exactly in the natural territory of Debir, but on its extreme north-east limit; so that it could, at the request of Achsah, be added to the Negeb country which she already possessed.

I would propose also to place near to it the town of Anim, which is written with the *Ain*, and is no doubt derived from *'Ainain*, *the two springs*. The *Yeh* does not appear in the present Hebrew text, but may very probably have been lost, being a small letter, for it is represented in the Septuagint version of Αιδαμ. This town was supposed by Wilson, the traveller, to be found at Ghuwein, but this site has been with more probability identified with the 'Ain of Simeon.

Khirbet el Dilbeh is, as I have before said, not an important ruin, but on the hill bounded north and east by the Seil are two fine tombs, and south of this, at Khirbet el Jíf, there is an ancient site which may possibly be the exact spot where Anim is to be placed.

We have seen, therefore, that El Dhoheriyeh is the only ancient site between Socoh (Shuweikeh) and Anab ('Anáb, as now correctly placed). The position of Dannah, or Deneh, has not been hitherto proposed. I have supposed it to be the modern Domeh, which is immediately north of El Dhoheriyeh, at a distance of about two miles. Domeh has hitherto been identified with Dumah, under the impression that it was north of Khirbet Dilbeh. In its true position it cannot, however, be so identified, for Dumah belongs to the group immediately round Hebron, amongst which Beth-Tappuah (Terffúh), Arab (Khirbet el 'Arabíyeh), and Zior (S'aír), are enumerated, a district in the high hills north of the Negeb. In order, however to make the identification more certain, I may remark that on the western boundary of this higher district stands the

village of *Duweimeh*, which may be identified with far greater propriety with Dumah, thus leaving Domeh for the town of Deneh, in the exact position which it holds in the list.

I may point to this as a fair example of the results of the Survey. Nothing but minute examination would have led to the discovery of the Upper and Lower Springs, to the correction of Robinson's error as to Anab, or to the proper placing of Domeh, which destroys the very plausible identification as yet attached to its supposed position.

It will be remarked also that from this instance of the exactness of the lists, they seem, as in the case of Zanoah and of Maarath, to give, by the order in which the towns occur, correct indications of relative position.

CLAUDE R. CONDER, Lieut. R.E.

GREEK INSCRIPTION FOUND IN THE SAKHRA OF JERUSALEM.

THE following notes on the inscription mentioned by Lieut. Conder (p. 6), appeared in the *Academy* for November 7, 1874. They were, together with the passage on the word Αλκιος and that on forgeries in Jerusalem, taken from a letter by M. Ganneau to the Secretary of the Fund. The notes are here reproduced by permission of the Editor of the *Academy*:—

A Greek inscription has recently been discovered on the buried side of one of the flags used in the flooring of the Sakhra at Jerusalem. Copies of it have been sent to the office of the Palestine Exploration Fund, both by M. Clermont-Ganneau and by Lieut. Conder. The following is the text, with the short commentary furnished by M. Ganneau:—

ΚΩΜΕΡΚΙΑΡΙΟΣ ΑΝΕΨΙΟΣΑΡΕΟΒΙ . .
ΩΝΤΣ . . . ΩΝ ΕΝΘΑ ΚΑΤΑ ΚΙΤΕ . . ΟΑ . .
. . ΣΚΩΝΕΥΞΕΤΕ ΤΗΕΩΑΥΤΟΥ Α
Η
ΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΟΣΙΑΣ ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΜΔΕΚΕΜΒ . .
+ ΙΝΔ $\overline{\text{Α}}$ ΕΤΟΥΣ $\overline{\text{ΡΔ}}$ +
+

Commerciarius, cousin of Arcob (indos?) . . of the . . lies here, the . . Pray for him . . . of holy memory . . in the month of December . . . + Indiction I. year 104. + .

About half of the inscription, that on the left, appears to be wanting. Comerciarius is put for καμμερκιάριος, an official title under the Byzantine Empire; the proper name Areobindos is nearly certain, and is that of a historic family which played an important part under Anastasius and Justinian: several persons of this name were invested with important functions, and that of our inscription would be one of them,

since it was thought proper to mention his relationship with the object of the inscription.

It seems that the letters which precede ἔνθα κατάκιτε (for κατακεῖται) belong to the genitive plural in ων, pointing out, perhaps, the titles of Areobindos: the same observation applies to the first word of the third line, perhaps ὁ ἀπο . . . . The imperative εὔξετε shows the carver's imperfect knowledge of Greek.

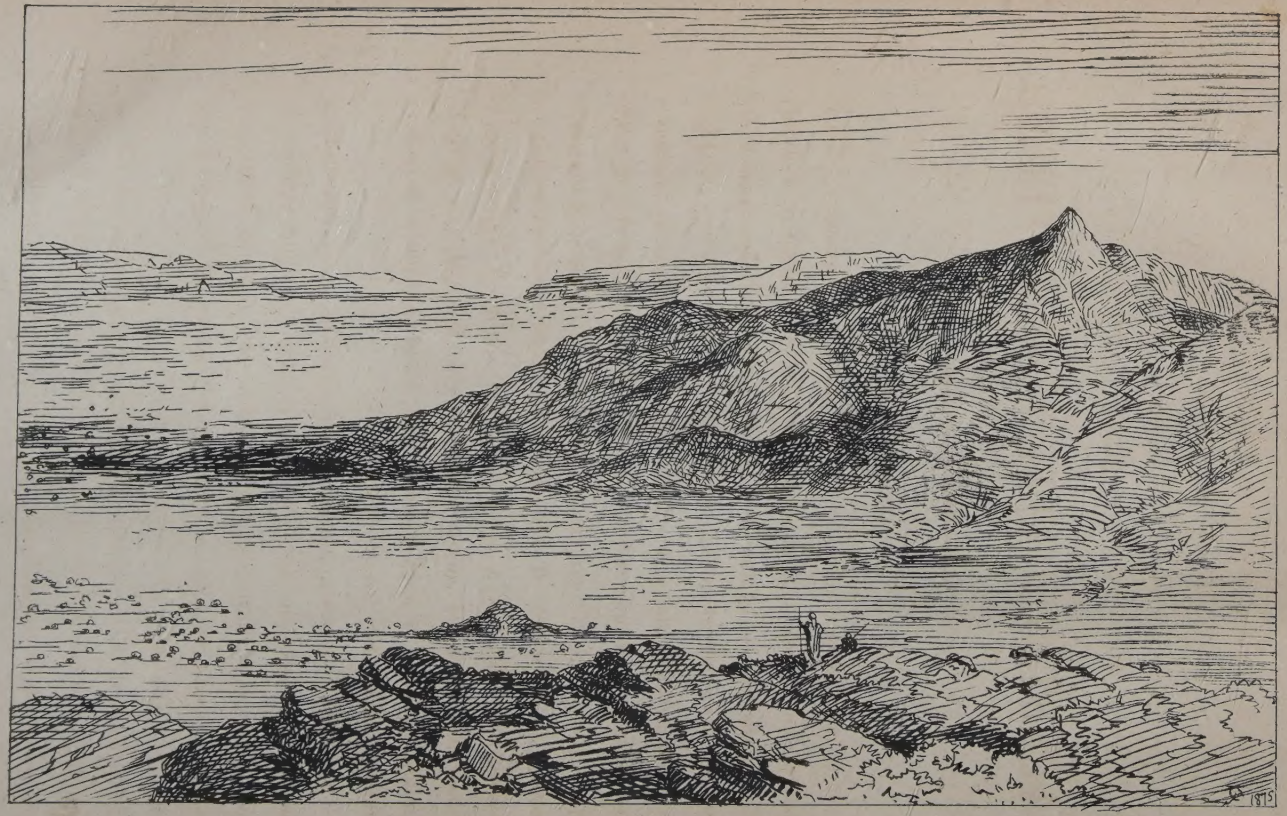
The day of the month of December was probably indicated. The grave question is that of the date: according to what era is the year 104 calculated? If, as one is tempted at first to believe, it is the era of Diocletian and the martyrs, this date would correspond to the year of our Lord 388, according to the *Art de Vérifier les Dates*. The number of the indiction agrees perfectly in this case. Nevertheless, the debased forms of the orthography and the appearance of the characters would lead us to admit an epoch somewhat earlier; but we know how little these orthographic and palæographic rules are applicable in Palestine. If this date be exact, we are brought to the time of Theodosius.

M. Ganneau thinks he has possibly obtained some clue to the mysterious Ἄλκιος of the Gezer inscription. He writes:—

"*A propos* of the Alkios of the bilingual texts of Gezer, I have lit upon a curious coincidence. Some years ago a sarcophagus was discovered at Lydda with a Greek inscription, of which Major Wilson gives a part only. I myself found the commencement about four years since. It mentions a certain *Pyrinoun*, surnamed Malthakes, grandson of *Alkios*, son of Simon, (son of) Gobar. The two names of Alkios being identical, perhaps they are those of the same personage! In fact, between the date of the sarcophagus, which probably belongs to the Herodian period, and that of *Alkios*, there are two generations, which brings us to the time of the Maccabees, at which I place the Gezer inscription. In this case our Alkios, son of Simon, Governor (?) of Gezer, would have this *Pyrinoun*, who was buried at Lydda, for his grandson.

"If the tomb which I opened on my last excursion is a family sepulchre, which everything leads me to believe it to be, it would result that our Alkios of Gezer was a native of Lydda. We may remark the resemblance between the Greek Ἄλκιος and the Hebrew Hilkiah."

MOAB DEAD SEA RAS FESHKAH. KURN SURTABEH.



KURN SURTABEH (THE ALTAR OF ED)

LOOKING SOUTH THE DEAD SEA IN THE DISTANCE

FROM A SKETCH BY THE LATE C. F. TYRWHITT DRAKE